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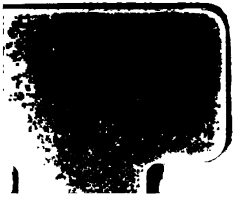

"It is a Child!" exclaimed the Captain.

THE

CHILD OF THE ATLANTIC.

BY

CHARLOTTE ADAMS,

Author of "The Stolen Child," "Ben Howard,"
&c., &c.

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THE

CHILD OF THE ATLANTIC.

THE opening scene of the present tale was the wide bosom of the vast Atlantic ocean; on either side lay expanded the boundless sea, and in front the distant coast of Florida. The sun was just risen; his dazzling rays were dancing on the sparkling waves, and cheering the crew of a vessel, which, with all sail set, appeared making for the land. The ship, though small, was an excellent sailer, and appeared to be fitted for a service of some danger, for it was well appointed. But no present purpose of attack or defence seemed to be meditated; for the crew, with the exception of two men, lay extended asleep on the deck. The master, or captain, as he was styled, and the pilot, alone kept vigilant watch

"If this breeze hold on some hours, we may hope to enter the Shark's-head long before night," said the captain.

"Before night, at any rate," answered the pilot.

"Anna," said the captain, "will think it long till our return."

"Women," rejoined the pilot, in a tone of indifference, "who share the fortunes of men engaged in hazardous pursuits like ours, should learn to control their impatience."

"My poor wife," said the captain, after a pause

of some moments, "has had too many lonely hours of late. I wish we were once at home again, and it should not be a trifle would take me away from her, —at any rate for some days."

"This Anna of yours," returned the pilot somewhat gruffly, "runs much in your head, I think; her wishes and her expectations seem to be matter of great consequence to you."

"And so they would be to you, Thompson, if she had been the only being for whom you had ever in the course of your life felt any love or interest."—So saying, the captain retreated a few steps, and folding his arms, remained with his eyes fixed towards that part of the distant shore near which he imagined was situated his temporary home.

At length his attention was arrested by a small dark object that was floating at a distance; and as the schooner neared it, he perceived that it was a boat, but apparently without any one to guide it, for no person appeared.

"Do you see yon craft, Thompson?" said the captain; "let us hail it:"—the men gave a shout, but no answer was returned, and presently coming close up, they slackened sail and took a survey of the little vessel that was thus far at sea without any one to direct its course.

"An empty boat," said Thompson, as he glanced at it, "washed from its moorings into the ocean; it is a crazy concern, and not worth our taking with us; we have boats enough at the creek."

"Not empty either, friend; look down into the bottom,—what lies there?"

"Whatever it is," replied Thompson, "it moves."

"It is a child!" exclaimed the captain, as an infant of about two years old raised itself in the boat, and turned its rosy face and laughing eyes upon the sailors.

"A child true enough," echoed Thompson; "a young mariner, and one who is like to have a short career, I judge, being at sea by himself."

"Bring the boat-hook," called the captain, "and draw to."

"What are you about, what are you going to do?" cried Thompson, as he saw the captain receive into his arms the infant, which a sailor handed out of the boat.

"What are you going to do; you are not surely intending to burden yourself with such an encumbrance?"

"The child would perish were we to leave it," replied the captain; "but I have little claim on the score of humanity, I only preserve its life that I may take it home to Anna; for since she lost her own little one she has drooped and pined, and this babe will be a companion to her in the lonely hours she so often has to pass."

The captain then desired food to be brought to the little boy, to quiet the cries which he uttered upon seeing himself surrounded by so many strange faces. The child appeared strong and healthy; and

it was evident from his dress that he did not belong to the poorer classes. The crew amused themselves in a variety of conjectures as to where the little stranger could have come from, and to whom he belonged. They asked him many questions, but could only gather from his little lispings that he was called Charles, or some name of similar sound.

It was late in the day when the schooner reached the Shark's-head, and sailing a short distance up that river, entered a creek which led to one of the loveliest spots in East Florida. When the crew had reached the place of their destination, the captain took the child in his arms, and leaping with him on shore, bent his steps towards home. The place of his habitation lay about half a mile from the creek. It was a small, but pleasant house, surrounded by hickory trees, interspersed with the graceful cypress, round whose stems the sea-grape twined in rich profusion. Groves of pine were in the distance, and close at hand was a lake, from whose tranquil bosom rose a small island, covered with orange-trees, the delicious odour of whose blossoms was wafted towards him by the land-breeze, which had already set in.

When Harvey, (for that was the name of the captain,) had arrived within a few paces of his house, he observed his wife sitting under the shade of a large tree that overhung the building. A table, covered with a clean white cloth, was spread ready for the evening repast, and on it were already placed

a collection of the choicest fruits of the country. Anna herself was engaged in looking over, and folding and unfolding the little wardrobe of her lost child: her face was pale and sorrowful, and every now and then tears flowed down her cheeks. Harvey stood still a few moments to contemplate her; when, raising her head, she suddenly perceived her husband, and uttering an exclamation of joy, sprang forward to meet him.

"Look here," said Harvey, after he had embraced his wife, "look here; I have brought you a young companion, whom I picked up alone on the wide ocean. Will you like to have him?" continued he, as he held the infant towards her, who smiled and extended his little arms, as though he rejoiced to be again under the tender care of woman. Anna gladly welcomed the little stranger, and having expressed the pleasure she felt at receiving him, listened with interest to her husband's history of the manner in which the child had been found: at the same time she brought forth the supper, and prepared some suitable food for her little charge.

Harvey, notwithstanding his love for his wife, was a man of bad character. He indulged in lawless pursuits, and took no pains to control his violent passions. His wife was many years younger than himself, and besides the love which her various amiable qualities inspired him with, his interest in her had been strongly excited by the peculiarity of the circumstances under which he had first become

acquainted with her. He had been on a shooting excursion in the back woods of the interior of North America, with a party of young men; when, one day, as they were returning from their sport, they perceived a girl, with terrified aspect, her clothes all torn, and her long hair flowing down her shoulders, running with the greatest speed towards the spot where they were. As soon as she perceived Harvey and his companions, she stopped short, and for a moment appeared hesitating what to do, but then rushed towards them, and hastily casting her eyes over the group, as if selecting him to whom she should apply, threw herself at Harvey's feet, calling out, "Save me, save me!"

Harvey felt gratified at her preference, and gently raising her, inquired in a kind tone of voice, what he could do to be of service to her. As soon as she was sufficiently composed to speak, she related that she was a native of England, and that she had come out to America with her father, who had been a farmer, and who, having failed in business, hoped in the new world to repair his fortunes.

The father and daughter had not been long arrived, and they were journeying into the interior, to choose where to fix their abode, when they were surprised and captured by a party of Indians, who immediately slew the unhappy father, and most probably reserved the same fate for the daughter, when she providentially effected her escape.

At the conclusion of Anna's recital, the hunting

party reloaded their guns, determined to make a stout resistance in case the Indians should appear to recapture the fugitive; but after waiting some time, and no savages showing themselves, it was concluded by Harvey and his companions that the Indians were either aware of the presence of the hunting party, or the flight of their captive had escaped their notice; and they prepared to return home.

"But what will become of me?" said Anna; "What must be my wretched fate! I have indeed escaped from the savages, but I have neither friends nor home. I know no one in America, and I have no money to enable me to return to England. Oh! sir," continued she, addressing Harvey, "take pity on me, let me go home with you; take me to wait on your wife and children."

"I have no home, my poor girl," replied Harvey, "to take you to, neither have I a wife or children; I am alone in the world, without a single human being to care for me, or for whom I care."

"Then must I lie down here and perish," said Anna, in accents of despair; "I have lost my dear father, and I care not how soon I die."

"No," said Harvey, taking her by the hand, "you shall not be left here: if you can content yourself with such kindness as my rough nature can show, and share the fate of one who has no home but the wide ocean, or a tent occasionally pitched in some secluded spot of earth, you shall go with me and be my wife. Say, shall it be so?"

To this proposal Anna, after some hesitation, assented, having no other alternative but being left to perish in the woods; and thanking Harvey for his good-will towards her, accompanied him to the next town, where they were married.

But Anna had not long been the wife of Harvey before she discovered that she was united to a man but little suited to her. In her father she had been accustomed to meet with integrity of character, with honest and upright principles; and to witness actions that dared to meet the light. In Harvey she unfortunately met with the very reverse of all this.

The discovery, when she first made it, caused her great concern; and as she experienced his kindness of manner and increasing affection, she became exceedingly desirous of winning him from his lawless pursuits, and leading him to honest and virtuous habits. But she was too little with him, and the fellowship and example of his associates were too powerful for her weak attempts to produce any radical change in his character. Still, she never abandoned the hope, that some time or other, she should induce her husband to see the error of his ways, and be able to detach him from the evil courses which he pursued. The loss of her infant too was a source of bitter grief, and it was not till she had had little Charles some time under her care that her spirits began to rally.

By degrees, the attention due to Charles, and his engaging ways, roused her to activity, and excited

a feeling of interest that beguiled the lonely hours of her husband's absence. The boy thrived under her judicious management, growing up strong and healthy, and his natural good disposition amply rewarded her for the pains she bestowed upon him. She taught him to read and write, to be useful and obedient to his parents, as she had instructed him to call Harvey and herself, carefully concealing that he was not their own child; but above all, she brought him up in the fear and love of God.

Harvey was a pirate; and the profits arising from his trade were, as is generally the case in all illegal traffic, very fluctuating. Sometimes he was reduced to poverty, and at others he returned home rich with ill-gotten spoil: when this last was the case, he loaded his wife with presents of the richest silks and stuffs, with rings, and a variety of costly trinkets. But she, with a sense of propriety that guided all her actions, never departed from the suitable style of dress that was becoming her station. She was always remarkably clean and neat in her appearance, without any approach to finery. The only ornaments in which she was ever decked, was when, in expectation of Harvey's return home from a voyage, little Charles sometimes twined the scarlet flowers of the corolladendron amongst her black hair; or when she herself bound a cypress wreath upon her brow, in anticipation of her husband's departure.

But in process of time a far greater anxiety than

the loss of her husband's society began to press on her mind. Harvey had occasionally thrown out hints that he should take the boy on excursions with him; and as he grew older, he once or twice spoke positively of bringing him up to assist him in his employment. Her mind was filled with sorrow and apprehension at the idea of parting with the child of her tender love and care. She dreaded the perils and hardships that he must be exposed to in such a dangerous profession as that he was to enter: but it was the idea of the scenes of wickedness that he must witness, and the corruption that his mind and morals would undergo, that filled her with dismay, and often rendered her truly wretched. At times she endeavoured to console herself with the idea that the good principles she had instilled into his mind, and the love of God that she had awakened in his heart, would preserve him from contamination; but still at so early an age, for she calculated that he could not be more than nine years old, she had great reason to dread that he would not have resolution to withstand the seductions of vice, and the evil example of wicked companions. He had been brought up too in comparative solitude, and many vices, even crimes, with which children of his age are unhappily but too familiar, were to him unknown but in name; and though Anna, with a foreboding of what might one day be his destiny, had often talked to him of the wickedness that there is in the world, and of its dreadful consequences; and though she

had suffered him to read in books the history of bad men, still, of the practical consequences of vice he had had very little experience. Harvey might in some measure have afforded an example, but Anna, hoping to gain her husband's love for the child, had brought him up to pay him the respect and duty that a kind father might hope to win from his son; and she had carefully, as much as was in her power, hid from Charles's observation the faults of Harvey's character; and when she had been unable to do this, she had often, without violating truth, been able to put a plausible construction on words and actions, which must otherwise have excited dislike and disgust in her young charge.

Charles's disposition was docile and affectionate in the extreme, and he had an aptitude in learning that rendered teaching him a pleasure, and from a very early age he took great delight in reading. From something in his dress or appearance, it had always struck Anna that he was the child of a gentleman; and thinking that he might some day or other be claimed by his true parents, she wished to give him, as far as was in her power, an education fitted to the station in which he was probably born: and Harvey, willing to please and amuse his wife, purchased for her such books as she had herself made use of at school, and others of more recent date, recommended by the booksellers. With *Scientific Dialogues*, and *Harry and Lucy*, Charles was particularly delighted; for besides the pleasure he derived from their perusal,

they afforded him a never-failing source of amusement in the mechanical inventions which they led him to make.

One day when Charles was about eight years old, as Anna and he were looking over a parcel of books, which Harvey said had fallen to him as a prize, Charles observed his mother open one among the number, which soon appeared to occupy her whole attention, for all the observations which he made on the rest of the volumes were unheeded by her. He remarked that she smiled occasionally, and that she appeared to be deeply interested in what she read. Curious to know what subject could thus engross her, and his questions to that effect being unheard, he came gently behind his mother, and putting his arm round her neck, looked into the book she was perusing; but what was his surprise to find that though he saw the letters he was accustomed to, he could not understand one word of what was written. On making this discovery, Charles uttered so loud an exclamation of surprise, that he roused the attention of Anna, and upon his explaining the cause of his cry of wonder, she told him that the book was written in French, the language spoken by the inhabitants of France; and asked him whether he did not recollect whereabouts that country was situated on the map of Europe. Charles replied that he did, and repeated to his mother the boundaries of that kingdom; he then added, that he wished he understood French. His mother asked him why?

"Because," answered he, "if I did, I could then read that book that amused you so very much. I am sure it is very entertaining, you smiled so when you read it; and when I spoke to you, you never answered me, but only kept on smiling and reading."

Anna smiled again at the little boy's manner, and after a few moments' consideration said, "I will teach you French, it may be of use to you."

"Thank you, thank you, mother," exclaimed Charles, "and will you let me read that book?" continued he, pointing to the volume Anna still held in her hand.

"When you are grown up you may read it," replied she, "but you would not at present comprehend it: but there are a great many amusing and instructive books in French, which, when you are able, you may read, and which will entertain and interest you very much."

Anna owed her knowledge, which was very perfect, of the French language to an accidental circumstance. She had, indeed, previously acquired at school as much French as is usually taught to a farmer's or tradesman's daughter; but her being able to read and speak with the same ease as she did her native tongue, was in consequence of her having resided some years in France, with a lady to whom she offered her services as humble companion, when her father's affairs first grew embarrassed. This lady became attached to Anna, and it was to her kind counsels and instruction that she was, in a

great measure, indebted for the rectitude of her character, and the good principles which regulated her conduct through life. Anna used to write letters for her patroness in French, and by that means acquired grammatical knowledge, as well as fluency in the language.

Anna found teaching little Charles by no means a hard task; and by constantly speaking to him in French, he soon learned to comprehend her, and to answer as well as when they spoke their native tongue. In short, owing to the natural quickness of his capacity, and to Anna's judicious instruction, there were not many little boys who would have surpassed him in useful knowledge. But as it was most probable that Charles would never emerge from the humble station of life in which he was then placed, Anna wished to prevent his becoming too refined in his notions; and at the same time that she cultivated his mind to the best of her ability, she taught him to be useful in their little establishment, and to assist his father in any labour that he might have to perform, when he was on shore. She sent him with his bill into the woods to cut fuel for their fire; and to the marshes to collect the excellent acorns of the live oak, with which she used to thicken their venison soup, and from which she obtained the oil burned in their lamps at night. These acorns he could easily obtain, as the trees, from having their roots washed by the tides, lie almost along the ground, forming a great contrast to the grand and

noble aspect presented by these trees when growing in situations better adapted for them. Charles made baskets after the Indian fashion, and he learned to prepare and dry game for the use of Harvey and his men, when out on their cruises. He caught fish, and roasted them outside the habitation, after the manner of the country; and from being occasionally indulged in the use of a gun, he acquired a tolerable degree of dexterity in shooting pheasants and partridges, and the wild turkey, which is better tasted and also larger than the tame ones of England; and above all, the rice-bird, that greatest delicacy of the country. But the occupation that afforded Charles the greatest delight, was rowing and managing the sail of a small boat, that was kept for the purpose of passing over to the island which, as has been already mentioned, was situated in the midst of the lake that lay not far from the house. Here Charles used to go for oranges; and having laden his boat with the finest fruit, he would return, and carry them up to the house in baskets, for immediate use, or for Harvey to take on board. On this lovely little isle, Charles spent many days in constructing a bower, around which he twined the sea-grape, and the luxuriant creeping plants, which flourish in this charming climate; and here, when his arbour was completed, he would repair early of a morning, and after gathering and placing in it a nose-gay of the most fragrant flowers, he would return

and bring over his mother to sit and work, while he read to her for hours.

In the affection with which Charles returned Anna's love, and in witnessing his improvement, she derived her chief sources of happiness; for unfortunately, her hope of reformation in her husband was quite disappointed. Time, by which surprising changes are often wrought, effected no improvement in Harvey: and as year after year passed on, Anna with sorrow observed, that the faults in his character only gained additional strength. Towards herself he was not generally unkind, but his harsh and imperious temper too often broke forth before her in his conduct to his men, and even occasionally in his behaviour to her beloved child.

Chapter II.

At length, the time which had filled Anna's mind with dread, arrived; and a period was fixed for Charles's first voyage. This event was a little accelerated by a clever boy, the son of one of Harvey's crew, having resolved upon quitting the sea for a permanent situation on shore, and in consequence it became necessary to find some one to supply his place. A sharp active lad was indispensable to Harvey in his pursuits, and he thought that he could no where

better choose, than in his wife's intelligent sensible little charge.

It was by the sea-side where Anna and Charles had accompanied Harvey, to take leave of him on his departure for a voyage, that she learned the sad tidings. As he stepped into the boat that was to convey him to the schooner that was lying a little way off, he whispered in her ear, "Next voyage, Anna, that boy must accompany me."

Anna turned away with a feeling of sorrow at her heart, that she could not control, and slowly pacing the sea-shore, covered her face with her hands, and burst into tears. Charles walked in silence by her side, when after a time, greatly distressed at witnessing her grief, he put his arms round her, and said, "Do not cry so, mother; my father will soon return; you know he said he was going but a short voyage. And, dear mother," added he, "are we not happier when he is away, than when he is with us?" Charles stopped short, fearing that he had said what was wrong, for Anna made no return to his caresses. In truth, she had not felt his embrace, nor heard his words; and so lost was she in thought, that quite unconscious of his presence, she removed her hands from her face, and exclaimed, "If his pursuits were but honest, I should not care!"

Charles started in astonishment, and his gesture of surprise recalled Anna to her recollection, and made her aware that the secret she had so long and so carefully kept, had escaped her. At first she felt

much concerned, but a little reflection convinced her that she would be acting with better judgment, if she were to make Charles in some degree acquainted with the true character of those with whom he was soon to be associated. She could then better prepare him to resist some of the temptations to do wrong, that would assail him; and calling him to her, she seated herself on the fragment of a rock, and placing him beside her, commenced the difficult, and as it appeared to her, almost impossible task of enabling her child to preserve the purity and integrity of his character, when he was to be constantly in the society, and under the control of those who neither feared God, nor regarded the laws of man.

"You have often, my dear child," said she, "seen me weeping after your father's departure, but you have not known the true nature of my grief; for though I feel interested in him, and have sometimes regretted his absence, still the chief of my sorrow has arisen from a very different cause. I was brought up from a child to love God, and to fear to displease him. I was early taught that I must control my bad passions, that I must resist the evil power that is always rising in our minds, and urging us to do what is wrong. I was told that this evil power assumes the form of pleasure, while to do right is often both disagreeable and difficult." "That is what you have often told me," said Charles, pleased to find that his mother, when a child, had received the same instruction as himself. "And I have told you too,

my dear," continued Anna, "that this world is not our home, and that we are only journeying through it to reach the abode where we are to dwell for ever: that here we are but travellers in a strange country, of which the prince is our enemy, and who is constantly throwing out lures to cause our destruction."

"Yes," replied Charles; "and you tell me that it is often so difficult to know what it is that will really make us happy, that we must watch very carefully that we are not deceived."

"And will you watch, my child?" exclaimed Anna, clasping his little hands in hers, and looking in his face with an expression of countenance, which Charles, to the latest hour of his life, never forgot: "Oh! will you watch? and will you not, when far away from my warning voice, become wicked like the men with whom you will associate?"

Charles was much affected by his mother's words and manner, and he assured her again and again, that he would always be good.

"Alas! alas! my poor boy," said she, talking to herself, rather than to him, "you know not what you have to encounter. When I feel how difficult it is to be good even amidst the common temptations of every-day life, my heart dies within me upon thinking of the scenes of wickedness into which you will be thrown.—But, I was going to speak to you of your father:—you and I in our early youth have had the blessing of some one to watch over us, and instruct us in our duty, but that was not the case

with him, poor man! He had no one to lead him into the right path, and from a child he has lived with vicious people."

"But why has he not learned to be good of you, mother?" inquired Charles. "I am sure you have wished him to be so."

Anna was at a loss what to answer; but after a few moments' consideration, she replied, "I have often and often implored him to repent, and change his mode of life, and I still hope that he will; but it is a hard task to break through habits that long continuance has made almost second nature. It may be done: but it is a work of great difficulty: knowing full well, how great is the difficulty, makes me doubly anxious to preserve you from ever acquiring the practice of vice."

"I do not wonder now, mother, that you are unhappy when my father leaves us, as he goes away to do what is wrong."

"Unhappily," continued Anna, "he has never been brought up to any business by which he might earn an honest living, and he says that by some means or other he must maintain us."

"But why," said Charles, "should he go away to do that; have we not plenty of everything we want?"

"Plenty," replied Anna, with a sigh. "We have vegetables and delicious fruits," said Charles, "and we have fish, and my father can shoot plenty of game; and then he can hunt the deer and the buffalo,

and we could prepare the bear-hams that he likes so much: we have everything we want; have we not, mother? Why, then, should he go away, as it makes you so unhappy?"

"I am afraid," replied Anna, "that to a man used to the interests and bustle of busy life, our retirement would seem dull; besides, Charles, you forget that, though we have abundance of food, we should still want clothes to wear."

"Ah! indeed I did forget," said Charles, "we must have clothes. But," added he, after a few minutes' silence, during which he had been busily pondering something in his mind, "why cannot he carry some of our dried provisions and game to one of the large towns he talks of, and get the people to give him clothes in exchange?"

"I am afraid, my dear," replied Anna, "that your father would think himself ill repaid by any traffic he engaged in, if the profits were not large. We must try if we cannot bring to mind some commodity that would prove a valuable article of trade."

"I can think of none," sighed Charles; "and yet, stop," said he, starting up with animation, "I have thought of something. Do you not remember, mother, when a party of Creek Indians encamped near our dwelling, I used to see the little children gathering a small insect off the prickly pear?"

"Yes," answered Anna, "they were collecting the cochineal insect."

"And you told me," continued Charles, "that

in many parts of the world they were highly esteemed, as a beautiful red colour was obtained from them."

"I did so, and I mentioned to you a number of purposes for which this insect is employed."

"Let us," cried Charles, "gather abundance of these insects, and give them to my father to sell; let us begin directly;—come, mother, let us hasten home."

Anna rose to comply with the little boy's request; and though she feared that it must be a very long time before two persons could collect a sufficient quantity to be of any value, she felt unwilling to cast a damp upon Charles's ardour by any discouraging observations, and therefore entered with readiness into his little plan.

By the time that they reached home, they found it was too late to begin their occupation that night, but the next morning, as soon as it was light, Anna and her little boy sallied forth with their baskets, in quest of the coveted treasure. The precious insect was found in abundance on the smooth-leafed prickly pear, a plant which abounds in East Florida.

Charles had been trained to habits of patient industry, and, day after day, he resumed his wearisome occupation with unabated zeal. One evening, as he was returning home from his customary employment, he stopped on his way to gather some branches of the shrub with which he was in the habit of staining the wood he used in his favourite

amusement of making small boxes, winders for silk, and a variety of little fancy articles for his mother's use. It was nearly dark, and by mistake he plucked some slips from a different plant, and, taking them home with the others, boiled them all together. On looking next morning into his pan of dye, he was surprised to see the surface of the liquor covered with a substance, which, upon closer examination, he found resembled wax. He hastened to call his mother, to come and look, and asked her if she could tell if anything had been dropped into his dye. His mother said, she thought that melted wax had been poured into the pan, but how it had been done she could not tell; when an old Indian, named Malo, who was occasionally employed about the premises, and who happened to be present, told Charles that the substance which puzzled him came from branches of the candle-berry myrtle, which he had by mistake mixed with the shrub he used for dyeing; and he added that, where the plant abounds, large quantities of wax are obtained from it, and it forms an important article of traffic. Charles seized with avidity this new idea presented by the Indian's observations; and, as the candle-berry myrtle grew in profusion around the neighbourhood, he instantly determined to set about gathering berries, and obtaining wax from them. Accordingly, he divided his time between collecting cochineal and the less laborious work of wax-manufacturing, in which last occupation he was so greatly assisted by his mother,

that his little stores soon began to acquire a certain degree of value. Besides, he was, with Anna's aid, accumulating a tolerably large quantity of game, fish, and hams, which they, from time to time, as occasion suited, employed themselves in drying and preserving. Added to all which, Anna had, from the time of her first coming into the country, kept silk-worms, and she had by her a large stock of silk prepared from these useful insects, for whom no climate appears so well adapted as Florida, not only from the mulberry-tree growing there in the utmost luxuriance, but from the climate being particularly well suited to them, there being no accidental frosts nor cold mornings to benumb, or often to destroy the insects, as is occasionally the case in Italy; nor thunderstorms, as in Georgia, which are apt to affect and injure them. In Florida, frequent showers refresh, and sea-breezes agitate the air, and the heavy dews that fall during a night of eleven hours' duration, keep the atmosphere of a very equal temperature.

Harvey's absence was protracted long beyond the expected time, and the rainy season had set in before his return home. This was a reprieve for Charles, for his father always past the winter, if winter that can be called where snow is hardly seen twice in a century, at St. Augustine, or some one of the capitals of the neighbouring provinces. The diligent child did not suffer this time to be unprofitably passed; for after he had received his mother's daily instructions, and learned the lessons she set him, he em-

ployed himself in carving his stained wood, in making baskets and fishing nets, the string for which purpose was afforded him by the inner bark of the mangrove-tree, and in polishing the woodpeckers' bills, of which he had accumulated a good many. The northern Indians look upon the woodpeckers' bills as articles of considerable value, using them to adorn the coronets of their princes, round which they are placed, with their points outwards. They will exchange for them, with the southerns, well-dried skins.

In these and other necessary occupations Anna and her child happily passed the winter months; and it was with regret that they witnessed the return of spring, all glorious as the season is in that climate, when nature bursts suddenly into such luxuriance of verdure and variety of blossoms, as cause the province of East Florida to resemble a garden. But Harvey was returned to take Charles from his happy home.

For some time after the pirate's return, he was busily engaged with his men in looking over and repairing his vessel, and in laying in a stock of provisions, previous to a fresh cruise. The services of Anna and Charles were called into request, and the little boy now spent most of his time on board of the ship in waiting on the men, and lending such aid as was compatible with his strength and ability. One morning, as he was waiting on deck for orders, his attention was arrested by a conversation between

the captain and one of his crew. They were talking of a party of Spanish merchants, who had just arrived some distance up the coast, for the express purpose of trafficking with the settlers or with the Indians for the produce of their country, and that they were men of consequence, and willing to give a good price for the articles offered for sale.

Charles heard in silence; but the moment he was at liberty, he ran off to his mother to repeat the conversation which he had overheard, to tell her of the hopes with which it had inspired him, and to request her to mention his little stores of merchandise to his father, and beg him to take them and try to dispose of them to the Spanish merchants, and to leave him at home with her, instead of taking him on a voyage. Accordingly in the evening, when Harvey returned, Anna, having first carefully prepared his supper, and waited upon him, and borne the ill-natured sallies of his untoward temper with her accustomed sweetness and forbearance, she opened the subject, and Charles, with palpitating heart, brought forth all his stores.

Harvey listened to his wife with attention, and something of his former kindness towards her seemed to come over him as he witnessed her tears, and listened to her earnest entreaties to be allowed to retain her child with her, or at any rate to have his departure delayed till he was older. He looked, too, on Charles with a degree of complacence that he was unaccustomed to, and, though apparently

unwilling to allow it, he could not help, from time to time, uttering exclamations of surprise, as the little boy displayed first one and then another of his treasures. After all had been viewed, Harvey stood pondering, as though calculating the chances of profit or loss; at length he exclaimed, "You have not been idle, boy, and your goods may be of some value; at any rate, I will take them to the Spanish merchants and try what can be done; and you may remain at home for the present."

With true joy Charles and his mother heard these words, and they thanked Harvey from their hearts for his kindness, for such his consenting to their wishes appeared to them; for they were not aware that, had not Harvey thought it would be a profitable speculation, he would not have undertaken it. The emotion produced by the tears of his wife and the entreaties of their adopted child was only transitory; for the distresses of others made but small impression on his selfish character, and nothing but the all-powerful stimulus of gain induced him to depart, even for once, from a mode of life which he pursued with hopeless pertinacity, and which he obstinately declared nothing should ever cause him to forsake.

The next day, the repairs of the vessel being completed, and the stores safely stowed on board, Harvey set sail, Anna having first obtained from him a positive assurance that he would proceed straight to the place of his destination; for she was

too well acquainted with the character and habits of her husband, not to entertain reasonable fears that he might still be deterred from his good purpose, or by idly loitering on his passage, arrive too late to make an advantageous bargain. Besides the disappointment that would arise to her child, and the gratification of retaining him with her, she felt an earnest desire that by the success of this, Harvey's first essay in lawful traffic, he might be induced to abandon his vicious pursuits, and engage in a regular and honest way of business. But with Charles, no misgivings of a painful nature arose to damp his joy, and he turned from the sea-shore after his father's departure, to resume, with unmixed delight and satisfaction, his usual employments.

Chapter III.

Charles had no little play-fellows; but never having known the companionship of children, he did not feel the want of it; and the care of a variety of pets, and attendance upon the domestic animals in and about the house, occupied a part of that time which little boys in general pass at marbles, cricket, or other sports.

First on this list, but by no means first among Charles's favourites, shall be mentioned the hogs,

which, with Malo the old Indian's assistance, he took care of. The flesh of these animals, in Florida and the adjoining countries, excels any of the kind in Europe, owing to the abundance and delicacy of the food upon which they feed. Those among the herd from which bacon was to be prepared, were supplied by Charles with Indian corn, in order to harden the fat; and the others he used often to assist in placing on a raft, in order to pass them over to a small island near the coast, which abounded with the species of palmeto, called after their name, the hog palmeto. This tree, which grows to the height of ten or twelve feet, is remarkable on account of the eatable part consisting, not as in other plants, of either the leaves, roots, or fruit, but in a pithy substance of a sweet luscious taste, lying within the outer bark, and which the hog particularly delights in.

In the establishment, too, there were cows and sheep; but these animals, so valuable in England, did not thrive here as in that country; the cows not yielding above half the quantity of milk, and the sheep losing their fine thick fleeces, which are succeeded by hair; still they were very useful, and Charles was accustomed to find shade for them during the heat, or shelter when it rained, under the natural bowers of the smilax, or of the dog-wood tree, whose interweaving branches form dense and shady groves.

Rabbits also formed a part of Charles's live stock.

The rabbits of Florida resemble the wild ones of England in form, colour, and taste; they do not burrow in the ground, but frequent marshes, hiding themselves in sedgy watery thickets. These, with a squirrel, a tame monax, (a pretty animal about the size of a rabbit,) and a racoon, completed the list of quadrupeds under Charles's care.

The racoon, though smaller, a good deal resembles the fox in appearance; it is a mischievous animal, and a great nuisance to corn-fields and hen-roosts. It feeds also upon crabs and oysters; and it was owing to its taste for shell-fish, that Charles had captured the one he had in his possession. He was early one morning walking by the sea-shore, when he perceived at a little distance off, a wild animal which did not run away as he advanced. He went up to the spot, and discovered that a raccon, which had been prowling the night before over a bed of oysters, was held fast by the leg by one into which he had thrust his paw, and who had closed his shell upon him, whilst he was endeavouring to abstract the delicious contents. The oyster was so firmly attached to a rock of others, that the racoon had no chance of escape, and had not Charles released his paw, he would have been drowned by the tide when it next flowed in. The little animal appeared grateful for its rescue, and became tame, and attached itself to Charles, who occasionally treated him with cake and sweetmeats, of which he was very fond. He had also such a taste for wine and liqueurs, that

whenever Harvey was at home, he watched him closely, to prevent the idle crew from intoxicating him, which they amused themselves by doing, whenever they could find an opportunity.

Of birds, Charles had several, some which he had succeeded in taming sufficiently to allow of their being at large, and some which he kept confined in cages of his own manufacture. The feathered tribes of Florida, as is generally the case in hot climates, though most beautiful in their plumage, have very little melody in their notes; but the mocking-bird is an exception to this rule. This bird has such a variety of notes, that the Indians call it by a name which signifies four hundred tongues, and the English have named it mocking-bird, from its imitating the notes of every bird it hears, from the humming bird to the eagle. It is sociable, and inclined to become familiar with man, and its ways when singing are remarkably pretty. It spreads out its wings, and gradually raises itself, then sinks down again bending its head, then turns round with its wings still extended, so that it appears to be dancing to its own music.

Charles had one of these mocking-birds, and also a humming-bird, and both were favourite pets. It is very difficult to keep the little humming-bird alive in captivity; but Charles, by great care, had succeeded in preserving one, which, like the racoon, owed its capture to an accident, when seeking for sustenance. The curious little creature had thrust itself too far into

the tube of a trumpet-flower, its favourite food, an not being able to get back again, became Charles's prize. Confined also in a cage, was a painted finch, or, as the Spaniards call it, a painted butterfly, kept by Charles, not for its melody, though its notes are soft, but for the splendour of its plumage; its head and the upper part of the neck being ultramarine blue, the throat, breast, and under part of the body bright red, and the back and wings green. Another captive, was a red-bird, or Virginia nightingale, valuable both for its agreeable singing, and the beauty of its plumage, which is entirely scarlet, except a black stripe round the base of the bill.

Far different in external appearance from these two last, was another of the feathered tribe in Charles's collection, who, drest in sober brown, gave notice by his strange cries, when a shower was coming on. By some, this is called the rain-bird; and by others he is named the old man, on account of the duskiness of his downy feathers.

Near the house, in gourds hung on poles for them to build in, were purple martins, which were very useful in chasing away hawks, and any vermin likely to be injurious to the domestic poultry; and a tyrant with clipped wings hopped tame about the premises. This little bird, which is in general quiet and harmless, displays astonishing courage at the time the hen is brooding, and till the young are flown; attacking all kinds of birds that come near its station. None, from the smallest to the largest

escaping its fury; it will even fly at an eagle, and fixing on its back, persecute it in such a manner, that after vainly turning and twisting in the air, he has been obliged to alight on the top of the first tree he sees, from whence he does not dare move, till the little tyrant is tired, or thinks proper to leave him.

Chapter IV.

Young people who are blessed with good and kind parents, know that the promises given by them will be kept, and that though they are but children, they may rely with security upon their word. How often a child exclaims with happy confidence, "I know I shall be permitted to do so and so, because mama has said that I shall:" or, "I am to go to such a place, because papa has promised to take me there." Children should early in life be made to understand how essential to the formation of an estimable character, is attention to this particular point; and how much of their success in after-life will depend upon the reliance that may be placed upon their punctuality, by those with whom they may have transactions.

To this class Charles's father did not belong; he had, as has been already shown, no integrity of character; he set no value upon his word, and would

give or break a promise with equal ease, where his own individual interest was not concerned. When Harvey first set sail, it was his full determination to keep his promise, and proceed straight to the Spanish merchants, because he thought it his interest so to do. Happy would it have been for him, had he not been deterred from his purpose! Forfeiting his word in this particular instance, was, as will hereafter appear, the ultimate cause of all the series of events which, one after another, led to the fatal catastrophe that terminated his life.

Harvey had reached within a few miles of the place of his destination, when looking towards the shore, he observed on the nearest point of land a certain signal, which he understood as giving notice that some friends, or rather associates, with whom he occasionally joined forces in a piratical attack, were in that neighbourhood. Scarcely had he made this discovery, when he observed a boat put off and make towards him. He immediately slackened sail, and waited till it came alongside. It contained a messenger to invite him to a feast and grand entertainment that was to take place that evening, to celebrate the return of some pirates from a very successful expedition. Harvey then recollected the circumstance, and that he had been asked to join the party, and that he had refused the invitation, having at the time something else in view: but his friends on land, observing his ship, concluded that he had changed his mind, and sent out their boat to

bring him on shore. The man who was the bearer of the message enlarged upon the excellence of the projected entertainment, and Harvey, who never thought of forbearance or self-government, yielded without hesitation to the temptation; and leaving the ship under the care of Thompson, desired him to await his return, and stepping into the boat, was soon conveyed ashore. It may here be observed, that Harvey's vessel had just been new painted, and as she carried the colours of a regular trader for this expedition, there was little risk in the schooner lying at anchor all night. Besides, the whole coast of East Florida is particularly favourable to piracy, from the great number of creeks and inlets that intersect the land. The province is consequently greatly infested by these sea robbers.

Thompson would willingly have accompanied Harvey in his visit on shore; and though he acquiesced in the opinion that there was no one to whom the charge of the vessel could be safely intrusted if he and the captain were both away, he felt out of humour, and determined to make himself amends by feasting on the choicest provisions in the ship, and drinking plentifully of the best wines and spirits. Accordingly, he descended into the cabin, and selecting the best of everything, seated himself to the full enjoyment of his repast. With greediness he devoured the delicacies spread before him, and washed them down with repeated draughts of wine. He then prepared himself some strong grog,

and calling for his pipe and tobacco, kept on smoking and drinking, till at last, lost in the fumes of intoxication, he rolled from his chair and lay in a state of insensibility on the ground. The men above, soon finding out how matters went below, thought they would have a few hours' frolic on shore, and return before they were missed. Having come to this determination, they lowered the ship's boat and set off, perfectly secure from any interruption arising from the watchfulness of a master's eye.

In the mean time Harvey was in the high enjoyment of his revels on land, his voice sounding loudest of the loud, amidst the boisterous shouts of merriment, and senseless bursts of laughter of his companions; till at last, having eaten and drunk till all sense forsook him, he fell asleep on the spot where he sat, without breathing one prayer to the great Judge before whom he was one day to give an account of all his "idle words," or one thought of the wife and child whose happiness and welfare were so deeply interested in the undertaking from which he had suffered himself so easily to be allured. So completely was he overpowered, that it was late in the morning before he awoke. When consciousness returned, he recollected where he was, and taking leave of his entertainers, he desired to be put on board his vessel, and walking down to the shore, to get to the boat, what was his horrer and amazement to see his ship, his beautiful, his fast-sailing ship, a schooner, the pride and delight of his heart, one

blaze of fire! In an agony of grief and impatience, he jumped, accompanied by some sailors, into the boat, and pushed off as fast as possible to endeavour to save the burning vessel, but it was too late; he arrived just in time to see her give one lurch, and then sink for ever to the bottom.

Harvey remained some time transfixed with sorrow and amazement; when, giving a deep groan, he sunk into gloomy silence, and was rowed back to shore, where he accepted the offer of his friends to be sent home in their ship.

"The sloop is still left to me, and that boy *shall* go with me," said Harvey, as he landed at the creek, and caught a sight of the orange-grove that shed its delicious odours around, and the hickory-tree that shaded his peaceful dwelling. "I'll listen to no more nonsense; it's all their fault, Anna's and the child's, that this misfortune has come upon me;—my ship burned, and my crew lost! Had I not played the fool, and listened to their childish nonsense about sure and certain gains, and lawful traffic, these disasters would never have overtaken me. What had I," continued he, in passionate ejaculation, "what had I, a free man of the sea, a man whose own will is his law, who dares to seize by force whatever he desires, what had such a man to do with retailing the petty merchandise of women and children!"

Such were the meditations with which Harvey retraced his steps towards home, and they but ill

fitted him to hear with patience the violent bursts of grief from the little boy, or the touching sorrow of Anna, upon the discovery that the fruits of their industry, and the hopes of many weary days, were totally destroyed.

"It was all your own fault, all your own doing," passionately exclaimed Harvey: "What did you give me that load of wax for? vile inflammable stuff,—enough to set two ships on fire! But you shall pay for it; both of you: That lazy idle boy shall go with me to sea, and earn the living he obtains."

This ungracious mood of Harvey's was not improved by his learning in the course of a few days how the accident happened, which had deprived him of his favourite and valuable ship; and the conviction being forced upon him, however unwillingly, that his misfortune had arisen entirely from himself, and was occasioned by his breaking his faithfully-given promise, by stopping to a feast in the way, instead of proceeding straight to the port for which he was bound.

One of the crew, who had quitted the vessel during the temporary suspension of the mate's faculties, had related what took place after Harvey went ashore, to another sailor, who told it to a fisherman, from whom the old Indian heard it: and there was every reason to suppose that the ashes from Thompson's pipe, after smouldering for a time, must have set fire to some combustible materials in the skip;

and having no one to check their progress, the flames had burst into the conflagration that destroyed the ship, and hurried poor Thompson, all unprepared and unconscious as he was, into eternity.

After what had occurred, it would have been but waste of words, and only subjecting herself to useless anger, for Anna to have made any further attempt to retain Charles at home; and she, therefore, with aching heart, and many a sad foreboding, set about making such preparations as would be necessary for the use and comfort of her beloved charge. Charles was constantly by her side, aiding her with all his little power; and listening to her tender expressions and affectionate exhortations. He could not enter fully into the nature of all her anxiety, but he repaid her anxious care with the warmest love, and bitterly lamented the separation that was about to take place.

But vain were all regrets! The day was fixed. Charles and his father embarked on a voyage; and Anna was once more left alone in her solitary abode.

Chapter V.

Charles was a courageous little boy, and did not mind labour and fatigue; to both he had been in some measure inured. His mother had taught him to endure little hardships without murmuring, and

he had several times been up all night assisting in catching turtle. Harvey used to like to take the boy out, he was so dexterous in the management of the boat, rowing it very gently so as not to disturb the fish, and then stopping exactly at the right distance for him to strike out with his spear at the turtles, as they lay quietly reposing in the moonlight. But of hardships Charles had none at present to contend with; the weather was fine, and a cruise about the Bahama or Summer Islands had nothing in it of danger or unpleasantness; and learning to work the ship, with the names of the yards, ropes, and sails, he regarded rather as an amusement than a task. Harvey, too, who seemed much better tempered at sea than on land, was not unkind to him, and he was on good terms with the small crew that the captain had been able to enlist in his service after the dispersion of his old servants. After they had been some weeks at sea, the captain received an intimation at one of the islands where he touched to take in provisions and water, that made him steer his course for a large town in North America, where he remained a considerable time; he then put to sea again, where he carried on his lawless occupation with various success, and did not return home before six or seven months had expired from the period of his first setting sail with Charles.

During all this time the child had been the companion of lawless and wicked men; he was far removed from the judicious counsel and excellent

example of Anna, and it was hardly to be hoped that he could remain uncontaminated in such a situation; and, as the truth must be told, he certainly returned home an altered boy. He had seen the strong conquer the weak, he had heard cunning and knavery highly applauded, and the man who robbed and cheated with the greatest dexterity was looked upon as the first of characters. His notions of right and wrong seemed often quite confused, and the precepts of virtue, that had been early inculcated in him, appeared to have greatly lost their power over his mind.

With grief of heart, Anna perceived the change that had taken place in her little charge; even in the first joyous hours of their reunion, she observed with pain the clouded expression of countenance that had usurped the place of the frank open intelligence, which once shone so conspicuously in his face. On their first meeting, he expressed great pleasure at again seeing his mother, but he soon began to feel uneasy during the conversations she had with him, and he soon tired of her lessons; he grew restless and impatient under restraint, and was ever seeking for amusement. The occupations and innocent pleasures, in which he used once to delight, seemed to have ceased to excite an interest. His garden was neglected, and his pets were but little noticed. He was always wishing for amusements that were not within his reach, and regretting that he had no playmate such as he had met with in the town he had

visited with Harvey. When there, his father having no need of his services, allowed him to spend his time just as he liked, and he made acquaintance with the idle boys in the streets, who introduced him to a variety of games and children's plays, of which he did not before know even the names. But unfortunately they also made him acquainted with bad language and unbecoming conduct; and, in consequence, his mind was deteriorated, and his once gentle and amiable manner became rough and unpleasant. One alone, of all Charles's former tastes, seemed to remain unchanged, namely, his love of reading. He read with eagerness any new book that fell in his way, and reperused many of his old favourites. One day he took up a book, that was lying on the table at which his mother had been sitting to work; and, being pleased with two or three passages, he put the volume in his pocket, and was proceeding to the undisturbed enjoyment of it in the bower in the orange-grove, when he met Anna, who said she was going to gather the chinkapin-nut, and asked him to come and assist her; but he made the usual excuse, that he was engaged, or that he had something else that he was obliged to do, and passed on. He then stepped into his boat, and rowed to his favourite spot, where, throwing himself along on one of the benches under the delicious shade of the orange and the smilax, he was soon absorbed in the interesting contents of the volume he brought with him. It was a tale of

domestic life, simply yet pathetically written, and appealed forcibly to the best affections of our nature. It spoke of mutual affection, of reciprocal kindness, of patience, forbearance, and all the lovely attributes of Christian charity. It told of just dealings, of industry; of the honourable profits arising from useful steady labour, and it led the mind to contemplate the satisfaction that arises from a well-spent life, and the joyful prospect of a happy eternity. Charles was deeply interested, and so wholly engrossed with his book, that he quite forgot where he was, and everything but the amiable beings whose history he was perusing, when he was suddenly startled by a voice near him, calling out, "Good boy," repeating the words two or three times. Charles started up, and looked about to discover from whence the sound proceeded, but he could see no one, and, returning to his seat, he continued his book; but he was soon again roused by the same voice exclaiming repeatedly, "Charles is kind! Charles is kind!"

Very much astonished at the circumstance, he rose up again and commenced a fresh search, but no one could he see; he looked in and around the bower, he searched among the orange-trees, and under the over-arching vines, but no person appeared. Somewhat disconcerted, he again took up his book, but he tried in vain to fix his attention,—the charm was gone. It seemed as though some one, in mockery, had been repeating the words he had just heard; they excited in him a disagreeable

feeling, for he was aware how little he deserved the praise bestowed upon him.

"Charles is good," repeated he to himself; "no, I am not good, if what the people in this book say is right; and if what my mother taught me is true, and I think she could not be wrong."

"Charles is kind!" again cried the voice; "To whom?" thought Charles; "to whom am I kind? to no one now, I fear. I do not give up my own will and inclinations for the sake of another; I only think of myself. I fear I am grown what my mother calls a selfish character;" and involuntarily he began to compare his past with his present life. The recollection of the hours which he had passed in that very bower rose vividly to his mind,—hours that had been rationally spent, and which had been followed by the never-failing feeling of satisfaction arising from well-employed time. He remembered, too, the variety of little services which he had rendered, and which had contributed to the comfort of the family, and in particular the assistance he had afforded to his mother; often sparing her much trouble and fatigue; and then he dwelt upon the recollection of the pleasure he used to feel when she seemed most pleased with him, and smiled upon him and called him her "Good, useful boy."

"Surely," said Charles to himself, "I was much happier then than I am now; I always felt very differently then; indeed, I hardly think I am happy at all now."

"Good boy!" again repeated the voice, which had now drawn much nearer.

"They are mocking me,—making game of me," exclaimed Charles, starting up; "I will bear it no longer;" and he was rushing out of the bower, when a shower of the tender leaves of the orange-flower fell upon him, and, raising his eyes to the spot from whence it proceeded, he observed, perched upon a twig just above his head, a red-winged starling, the very same which, a short time before he sailed, had been to him an object of much interest. He had found the poor bird wounded lying on the outskirts of a rice-plantation, and, taking it up, he brought it home and nursed it with great care and tenderness; and, after a time, his kindness was repaid by the recovery of his little nursling, who became very tame and much attached to his master; and appeared as if it were grateful for the assistance that had been afforded it.

This species of bird, and the purple daw, are voracious corn-eaters: they are the boldest and most destructive birds in the country; consequently, it is an object with the growers of corn to kill as many as possible. The old starling is often shot, but it is very difficult to destroy the eggs, or the unfledged young, as the parent birds always build over the water, among reeds or sedge, the tops of which they ingeniously weave together, and then fix their nests underneath, so secure from wet, that, when the tides flow, they never reach them. They are an active

and familiar bird, and will learn both to talk and sing. But of this last fact Charles was quite ignorant; he only valued his little pet for its engaging ways and attachment to himself; and, when he was compelled to leave it, he consigned it to his mother's care, with an especial charge that it might be particularly attended to; and Anna, willing to please her little boy, and also to beguile the weary time of his absence, taught the bird the endearing expressions which had caused Charles so much surprise. "My poor mother! my kind mother!" exclaimed Charles, as the bird hopped on to his extended hand, at the same time repeating the sentences it had been taught. "My dear mother! what pains she must have taken to please me! And I have never once thanked her for taking care of all my pets; indeed, I have hardly heeded any of them; but I will again now. And this pretty bird, how he hops from my hand to my shoulder, and rubs his head against me as though he remembered me; it was very wrong of me to forget and neglect them as I have done. And above all, my mother"—Charles stopped short in his reflections, overcome with a sense of shame and sorrow, and, bursting into tears, ran out of the bower; and, getting into the boat, quitted the orange island and set out quickly in pursuit of his mother. After some search, he found her seated on the trunk of a decayed tree, that had fallen to the ground; her basket, half-filled with nuts, was standing beside her, her folded hands were resting on her knees, her

head was bent down, and tears were rolling down her cheeks. At the sight of her, Charles ran up, and, throwing his arms around her, exclaimed, "I have been crying too, and am feeling very sorry,—and you, mother, have been crying, because I am no longer good; but I am come to tell you that I will be good again. I will, indeed; indeed, I will: pray believe me, mother. Leave off crying;—I will attend to all you teach me; and I will help you again, and try to be useful, as I was before I went to sea."

"My dear child," said Anna, returning his caresses, "you make me happy again. Be good, and you will be happy yourself; no one can be so, who does not do his duty. You have been taught what is right, and, when you ceased to act properly, an uneasy feeling in your mind prevented your having true enjoyment. Thank God! you have not been long enough among the indifferent and the wicked, to have stifled the voice of conscience. I felt sure that you were not really hardened, and that you would return again to what is right; and it shall be my part, while you are allowed to remain on shore, to increase in you a love of virtue, and to fortify you for the resistance of vice." And, happily for the achievement of this good purpose, Charles did not accompany Harvey in his next cruise. For some reason that did not transpire, he chose to leave the boy at home, and by this fortunate circumstance time of inestimable value was gained, which Anna improved to the utmost advantage of her young

pupil. With well-directed zeal, and patient perseverance, she pursued her task. Her first care was to engage Charles to unfold to her fully the workings of his little mind. He had now had practical experience of vice, and it was his mother's desire to know minutely how he had been affected by the new world that had been opened to him, as she would by that means be the better enabled to correct the false estimate of happiness that he had formed, and the errors of judgment into which he had fallen. She read with him over again the lives he had before perused, of men who had attained to eminence in various ways, and she pointed out to his observation many facts that, from ignorance of the world, had been unnoticed by him; and she particularly drew his attention to the sad consequences that attended deviations from the path of duty, and the happiness, or at any rate the satisfaction, that resulted from virtuous conduct. Anna led him, too, to find pleasure once again in quiet and rational occupations, and, by degrees, he seemed to lose the taste it was but too evident he had acquired for a roving and lawless line of life.

But the best commentary possible on Anna's instructions was afforded in Charles's second expedition to sea. He was absent from his pleasant home many months, and, during that time, he had full experience of the hardships and vicissitudes which those who are much on the ocean but rarely escape. Storms, cold, and hunger, together with

harsh, and often cruel, treatment, were all by turns experienced by him.

A more than usual continuance of bad luck, had greatly increased the moroseness of Harvey's temper, and he wreaked his ill-humour on the weak and defenceless child under his care. Indeed, in every respect, Charles found this voyage a striking contrast to his first. The crew had grown dissatisfied with their leader; and instead of always hearing his father praised and admired as formerly, he frequently heard his conduct blamed, and he was spoken of in the most disrespectful terms. He observed, too, that during a time when the ship was becalmed and provisions ran short, every one tried to cheat or rob his neighbour, and instead of assisting each other in the hour of trial to bear cheerfully the inevitable evils that had befallen them, they gave way to unrestrained ill-nature and passion, and Charles could not fail to make the reflection, that these men were only good-natured when everything went smooth with them; and that they had no religious feeling to cause them to endure misfortune with resignation, or Christian charity to enable them to bear patiently with one another.

From what has been stated, it will be readily imagined, that Charles was heartily sick of a sea life, and that he experienced the greatest delight upon his return home. He eagerly related to his mother, whenever he could seize an opportunity, all that had happened to him during his absence; and it was

with heartfelt pleasure that Anna perceived, from the observations and remarks with which he accompanied his narrative, that he had now a clear perception of right and wrong; and that on many trying occasions he had had the courage to speak the truth, and sufficient resolution to resist several temptations to take what did not belong to him; and that, in many other respects, his conduct had been influenced by the precepts she had taken so much pains to impart to him.

"I never forgot to say my prayers, mother, this time," said he to her; "and when I was beaten and ill-treated, I used to recollect what you told me, that I had a Father in heaven, who would watch over me, and take care of me, if I was good; and then I remembered how often you repeated to me that you loved me, and that when I was away you often said to yourself, 'I wonder what my little Charles is about now, I hope he is doing his duty; and if he is, I can be happy, though he is away from me.' It was these thoughts that used to comfort me sometimes; but oh! it was a sad time I passed, and I often cried, and I thought our cruise never would end, and that I never should come back again."

"My poor little boy!" exclaimed his mother, as tears she had not the power to restrain fell upon the little bruised hands she held clasped in her own, "you have, indeed, been roughly treated; most earnestly do I wish that I was able to alter your

but I am utterly powerless; your father heeds

me not, or worse than that, when I speak in your behalf, I only draw upon you increased severity. But let us endeavour to enjoy as much as possible the time you are on shore; amuse yourself with your pets, and we will read together as usual, and you shall write, and we will speak French, and employ to the best advantage the few weeks you are to be at home; few, I am afraid they will be, for your father seems desirous to be soon off again."

This, indeed, was the case; for Harvey, impatient at his last unsuccessful cruise, only remained at home sufficient time to put the sloop in good order, and to take in provisions, when he put to sea again, bearing along with him the hapless Charles, who was doomed to experience a repetition of all sorts of hardships and ill-treatment. Harvey's former share of good luck seemed quite to have deserted him, and he returned from this and other cruises without making a single prize. His ill-humour increased to a formidable degree, especially when he remembered the loss of his schooner, to the destruction of which he mainly attributed his ill-luck; the sloop in which he now sailed being a smaller vessel, and not near so good a sailer. Whenever this recollection came over him, he never failed to reproach Charles as having been the cause of his loss, and to make the poor child endure the sad effects of his resentment.

At length fortune took a turn, and Harvey made a valuable seizure of a cargo of spirits. He returned home much elated, to take steps for the most

advantageous disposal of his prize, when he was soon informed by one of his emissaries, that a favourable opportunity offered of disposing of it to a tradesman of the name of Cognac, at St. Augustine, who was little scrupulous as to the manner in which a good bargain was to be made. Having received this intelligence, he called upon Charles to attend him, and set sail for a spot within a short distance of the capital. The landing a large quantity of smuggled goods in the neighbourhood of a large town like St. Augustine, was a business of considerable risk and difficulty, and Harvey depended for success not a little upon the quickness and address of Charles. He gave the boy his instructions as they went along, and bent upon the fortunate issue of his scheme, he thought it best to allow him to remain unmolested during the voyage; and Charles, happy in a short reprieve from ill-usage, amused himself with observing such objects as presented themselves to his view as they sailed along. From the nature of Harvey's expedition, his track was devious and uncertain, sometimes standing out far to sea, and at others skirting along close to the shore; or, upon appearance of any pressing danger from an enemy, running his ship up one of the many rivers or creeks which so frequently intersect the peninsula of East Florida. Charles was thus presented with a variety of different objects that interested and amused him. He was particularly struck with the beauty of the trees and flowers that

flourished and blossomed along the coast, but more especially with the magnolia. This tree forms an uncommonly striking object, rising with erect trunk to the height of a hundred feet, forming towards the top a perfect cone, and having its dark-green foliage silvered over with milk-white flowers, so large that they frequently measure eight or nine inches in diameter. He was much impressed, too, but in a different way, with the cypress, from whose roots rising and projecting, like large buttresses, spring stems eighty or ninety feet high, whence a flat top is thrown out resembling an umbrella; so that, often growing in forests all of an equal height, they present the appearance of a green canopy, supported upon columns in the air.

Soon after entering a river, which Harvey deemed it prudent to go some way up, in order to avoid a strange sail which appeared in sight, Charles was very much surprised at what seemed to him a long green island floating towards the vessel. He uttered an exclamation of surprise, which drew the attention of some of the crew to the circumstance; and from them, and from his own observation, he learned that this green island was nothing but a large collection of an aquatic plant resembling the English garden lettuce, which, clustering together in great quantities, forms floating islands, which, though first produced close to the shore, are sometimes carried by the wind or current into the river, presenting to the view a green plain several miles in length, and a quarter in

breadth; and their roots striking down into the mud, they afford a habitation to crocodiles, frogs, otters, herons, curlews, &c. &c.

Owing to numerous deviations from a straight course, it was not till the fourth day after leaving home, that the voyagers arrived at their place of destination,—a lonely spot on the sea-coast, two or three miles above the town of St. Augustine. It was just before the dawn of day, and while it was still dark, that Harvey had Charles placed in the ship's boat, and sent ashore. At that lonely hour, and favoured by darkness, Harvey thought he could best ensure landing the child without observation; and, after waiting for the return of the boat, and learning that his object had been securely effected, he himself stood out again to sea.

Charles's business was to act the part of a sentinel, and by a certain signal to inform his father of the arrival of the purchaser, and the proper time to approach with his cargo of spirits.

Not far from the coast stood the ruins of a house which had once been the habitation of a wealthy Spaniard, but which was now gone quite to decay, with the exception of one room, under which was a vault, where the captain and his customer had agreed to place the contraband goods, till the time arrived when they could best be conveyed secretly away. To this ruined house, Cognac, the purchaser, was to repair at a certain hour in the evening, and Charles was to meet him, and tell him to be in readiness,

while he himself was to ascend a high mount at a little distance off, which had formerly been erected for the purpose of a place of look-out, and which commanded a very extensive view of all the surrounding country. There, as soon as night approached, provided that everything appeared safe, Charles was to make the appointed signal to Harvey, giving notice that he might advance and land his store. The success or failure of the whole affair depended almost solely upon Charles. It was a momentous business for one so young, and he felt in their full force all the difficulties of the undertaking; but above everything, he dreaded lest, by any inadvertency on his part, he should draw upon himself the terrible effects of his father's anger. He stood motionless on the spot where he had been landed, meditating upon, and repeating over and over to himself, the directions he had received, till he was roused by the glorious spectacle of the rising sun emerging from the ocean, changing at once the darkness of night into the brightness of day; his refulgent beams, shooting into the sky, sparkling on the waves, and giving life and beauty to the whole face of nature. At the same instant the turkey-cocks in a neighbouring grove sent forth a chorus so loud and deafening, as to be astonishing to those not acquainted with the country.

After a time, Charles turned from the shore to look about for the high mount Harvey had described to him, and which he immediately perceived, lying

right before him. He made his way to it, and having ascended, he seated himself, and with an anxious heart fixed his eyes on the sails of the receding vessel which contained his father. Harvey was bearing away from the interesting spot, to avoid exciting suspicion, in case he was observed, intending to keep as much as possible out of view, till the time he was obliged to approach the coast.

Half an hour before sunset was the time fixed on for the signal; and the vessel was then to be near enough to enable it to reach the shore just at dark. Charles was ordered to try and listen for the church clock at St. Augustine chiming the half hour; and should the wind be unfavourable for hearing the bells so far off, he was to guess the time as well as he could from the height of the sun above the horizon; a thing which his experience as a little sailor, enabled him to do with tolerable accuracy. He was then to ascertain by means of a telescope, with which he was provided, if he was observed:—if he saw a figure with a blue bonnet on, enveloped in a white shawl, with the left arm extended, and the hand touching the mast, he was to understand that the captain was on the look-out, and if everything was safe on shore, he was to make the signal. The signal consisted in wrapping himself up in a scarlet cloak, which in a moment after he was to take off, and throw on the ground; this action he was to repeat three times; he was then to look if the figure in the blue bonnet and white shawl had

moved away; if so, he was to run down to the ruined house, and prepare Mr. Cognac for the ship's arrival. If the figure did not move, he was to repeat his signal till it did.

As many hours were to intervene before night, Harvey thought it not improbable, that Charles, on whose sagacity and alertness he greatly relied, might make some discovery, or get some information from Cognac, that would render the safe landing of the cargo of spirits an act of impossibility that night: if so, instead of giving the signal of the scarlet cloak, he was to wait till the sun was gone down, and then taking a tinder-box, which had been put up with the telescope, he was to set fire to a bundle of dry sticks, which he was ordered to collect, and lay ready in case of need. But should it appear prudent to abandon the plan entirely for a time, he was to kindle another fire on the top of the mount just at sun-rise, and afterwards repair to Cognac's house at St. Augustine, there to wait for further orders. Such were the little boy's directions.

Chapter VI.

Charles remained on the top of the mount watching his father's ship, till it was lost to view; when, feeling oppressed by the heat of the sun, he descended the hill to seek for some sheltered spot, which was soon afforded him at the entrance of an avenue of dog-wood. The branches of this beautiful shrub, which rises ten or twelve feet from the ground, meet and interlace each other, forming an avenue impervious to wet or heat, and often extending nine or ten miles in length. In this green retreat, Charles continued still meditating on the business before him, till he was assailed by feelings of pressing hunger. With the carelessness of childhood he had made no provision for the coming day, and no kind parent or friend on board ship had reminded him to take some food on shore. In his distress, he thought of his kind mother, and the care with which she had always packed him up a little basket of provisions, whenever he had been sent to pass a day from home. How good and tender had her care ever been of him! and in thinking of his much-loved parent, he forgot for a time his sense of hunger. But the feeling soon returned with additional force, and he determined to seek about for the means of satisfying his appetite. He quitted his green retreat, and wandering on in the direction of the sea-shore, he was not long before he arrived at a

grove of mangrove trees, and looking on the lower branches, he observed an abundance of oysters adhering to the stems and leaves. Rejoiced at the sight, he drew from his pocket a strong clasp-knife, and opening the shells, made an abundant and delicious repast; and after amusing himself with observing the curious trees before him, whose drooping branches, upon touching the earth, form fresh trees, he returned to his dog-wood bower; but he had not long been back, before he set forth again in search of something to drink. He proceeded in a different direction, and wandered on in the hope of finding a spring of fresh water. Tired and oppressed with heat and a burning thirst, he kept on; and on looking about in vain for what he wanted, till exhausted with fatigue, he threw himself on the ground. Here he lay, till feeling somewhat recovered, he raised his eyes to a tree directly opposite him, whose leaves and blossoms presented a most elegant appearance: but upon a more attentive examination, he discovered that what he took to be part of the tree itself, was the wild pine clustering so thick on its trunk and branches, as completely to disguise its appearance. These plants contain within their closely-placed concave leaves, a pint or two of clear water, which even when receiving the sun's perpendicular rays, continues fresh and cool, as if from a spring.

Uttering an exclamation of joy, Charles started up, and was preparing to seize upon one of the pines,

when he stopped short upon discovering that the tree on which they grew was a mancaneel, a tree which his mother had positively forbid him ever to approach, on account of the caustic nature of its milk-white juice, which renders it unsafe to touch in any part. Anna had herself suffered a violent inflammation in her eyes, which had nearly deprived her of sight, from a small portion of the juice squirting into them, when incautiously standing too near when a tree that grew close to their dwelling was being felled; and Charles had himself witnessed instances of most painful blisters being raised on the skin, from what was apparently a very slight touch. Disappointed he turned away, and proceeded further into the country. He kept wandering on, uncertain which way was most likely to lead to the discovery of what he was in search of, when on approaching a group of decayed trees, he was delighted to observe perched upon their summits an assembly of the snake-bird; for he knew from their appearance, though a growth of underwood obscured the view, that he was close to fresh water. He drew near, and making his way through brambles and bushes, he had the satisfaction of slaking his thirst in the pure water of a small lake. Much refreshed, and grateful for the timely relief that had been afforded him, he had leisure to observe the friendly birds who had acted as a beacon.

The snake-birds are a species of cormorant, of great beauty. They delight to sit in peaceful com-

munities on the dry limbs of trees, hanging over the lakes, with their wings and tails expanded, as if cooling themselves in the air. It was this peculiar attitude that enabled Charles to recognise them at a distance, and from knowing their habits, to be aware that he was approaching water. He had drawn near so gently, that the birds had remained undisturbed on the branches; but after admiring their beauty and singular actions for some time, he could not resist, and it is to be hoped that he will not be thought ungrateful for so doing, amusing himself a little at their expense. He took off his hat, and throwing it up into the air, uttered at the same time a loud shout, upon which the birds dropped as if dead into the water, but suddenly appeared again on the surface at a great distance from the spot where they first sank, showing only their long slender heads and necks above the water, which gave them very much the appearance of snakes.

After amusing himself on the margin of the lake for some little time, Charles thought it most prudent to return into the neighbourhood of the ruined house, as he feared lest by any chance he should not readily find his way back. But this fortunately was not the case; for he retraced his steps without any difficulty, having, although oppressed with suffering, carefully noted the way he came. The old man who assisted Charles in his domestic labours, had taught him a good deal of the quickness of Indian observation, at the same time that he excited the

admiration of his youthful listener, by histories of the astonishing sagacity of the tribe to which he belonged. He told Charles, that many individuals of his nation, could tell if any one had passed by, although the leaves and ground were so dry, as apparently to render it impossible that such a discovery could be made; and that when the ground was moist, and an impression had been made, they were able to tell how many of their enemy had gone by, or if any strangers had accompanied them, and to what country they belonged, merely from observing the mark of their moccasins. This surprising sagacity is often obtained at a very early age; a striking example of which was afforded by a little Indian boy of eight years of age. The child had been taken from his parents by some benevolent person, wishing to confer a favour on him, and placed at a college founded by Dr. B. expressly for the benefit of Indians, in order that he might learn reading and writing; but the child, despising what to him appeared useless accomplishments, ran away, and reached his home, after performing a journey of three hundred miles, in the course of which he had to pass the White river, which he got across, no one knew how.

On his return to the ruined house, Charles thought his best plan was to enter, and wait there till Cognac arrived; but as it still wanted several hours of sunset, and as he was very tired, he thought he would indulge himself with a short sleep; and looking about, as well as the imperfect light which entered

the room would allow, he saw, in a sort of recess in the wall, a heap of the long moss of which the beds in the country are chiefly formed. Into this recess he crept, and covering himself entirely with the moss, he thought himself perfectly secure from observation; and, laying himself down, soon fell asleep. He had been sleeping about an hour, when he was awoke by a rattling noise, just outside the building. He listened, and the sound was repeated; he gently raised himself, and uncovering his head, looked about, but not observing any thing that could have caused the disturbance, he got up, and creeping cautiously to the window, he looked out, and discovered that the noise that had alarmed him proceeded from a woodpecker, who was rattling his bill violently along the remains of a wooden paling that stood in front of the house. This favourite exercise the bird repeated several times, and then flew away. Though vexed to have had so untimely an interruption to his repose, Charles could not help smiling at the cause, as he placed himself again under his mossy covering, determined to resume his slumbers. But the charm was broken, he could not again go to sleep; but as he still felt tired, he determined to remain some time longer in the position in which he was. He had not lain very long, when he thought he heard the sound of voices; and listening attentively, it appeared to him that persons were approaching the house. An instinctive feeling of dread made him shudder, and he drew the moss closer around

him, which he had hardly done, when he heard the sound of footsteps entering the room, and two persons began conversing in low tones. At first Charles was too much frightened to attend to what was said, but his presence of mind soon returning, he listened attentively to the conversation that was carried on. The two men spoke French; and from the peculiar accent of one of them, and the sharp tones of his voice, Charles, to his great astonishment, recognised him to be a Creole, who had been in the service of his father, and who had been suddenly missed from the ship, the very night preceding Harvey's setting out on this expedition. It appeared that this man, who was of a very vindictive nature, had once, in one of Harvey's fits of ill-humour, received undue punishment; an injury which he never forgot or forgave, and for which he determined, sooner or later, to be revenged. An excellent opportunity for putting his evil intentions in execution was afforded at the present time. Not suspecting that Antonio, that was the name of the Creole, cherished any bad feeling towards him, Harvey did not conceal his plans from him, any more than from the rest of his crew; who all knew that they were bound to the neighbourhood of St. Augustine, with a cargo of spirits; and also, that to Charles was intrusted the business of making the signal, for the vessel to approach the shore and unload. In breathless terror Charles listened as Antonio unfolded his schemes to his companion, and learned that as soon as Harvey

had been drawn to shore by Charles's signal, he was to be rushed upon by a party of officers of justice, and carried off to the capital, to receive the punishment due to a pirate: that Antonio was to seize upon the captain's ship, and having forced Charles back into it, he was to sail immediately to Harvey's residence, and after rifling his house of everything valuable, set fire to it, and bear away Anna, to sell to a slave-merchant. Charles himself, who used to act as his interpreter, he purposed keeping as his own slave, as a punishment for the child's having detected him in, and reproved him for, several fraudulent acts towards his captain. Charles further learned, that the officers of justice were soon expected to arrive, and that they were to keep themselves concealed till the appointed time, in the mangrove-wood; the very wood where Charles had made his breakfast of oysters.

"It is strange," continued the Creole, "that we have not seen the boy about: little dog, how I long to punish him! When I once get him into my power, he shall know what it is to have offended Antonio——well, the hour will soon arrive: in the mean time, let us go to the mangrove-wood, and take some refreshment." So saying, he and his companion quitted the house.

As soon as they were gone, Charles began, in some degree, to recover from his fright, and when his senses were sufficiently collected, his little heart expanded in fervent gratitude to Heaven, that a

scheme had been discovered, which would have involved his beloved mother and himself in the greatest misery, and brought Harvey, all unprepared as he was, to an untimely end. He also rejoiced at the fortunate circumstance of his being well acquainted with the French language, to the knowledge of which he was indebted for being enabled to detect, and consequently counteract, the whole of Antonio's deep-laid plot.

Charles remained quietly in his place of concealment; but, as time passed on, he became exceedingly impatient for the arrival of Cognac: he longed for the protection and consolation of a companion, and he was in momentary dread, lest Antonio and his comrade should return and discover him in his hiding-place. At length, upon the approach of evening, Charles heard the long low whistle which was to give notice of Cognac's approach, and gaining courage, he crept from his hiding-place, just as Cognac entered the room, to whom he hastened to unfold his important tale. Cognac heard the boy's story in utter silence, but with deep attention.

"We had better go and hide among the trees," said Charles, when he had ended his narrative, "and wait there till I give the signal that there is danger ashore: we had better not stop here, I think," continued he.

"I think so too," at last replied Cognac.

"But you will remain with me, and go up the mount, when I ascend to set fire to these sticks;"

said Charles, as he stooped down to draw from among the moss a small bundle of wood he had placed beside him when he had lain down; "you will stay with me, surely?" But on raising himself up, and looking round, he found he had been speaking to empty air; and going to the door, he saw Cognac, with hasty strides, taking the way that led to St. Augustine. The very name of officers of justice had filled him with terror; and, like a true coward, he ran off at the slightest appearance of danger, losing in his own selfish concern all thought of the feelings or sufferings of others. Charles looked after him in dismay; and so abrupt had been the man's departure, that he could hardly believe he was once more alone. But in a few moments a full sense of his forlorn situation rushed into his mind, and gladly would he also have made his escape, but the dread of Harvey's anger, and the obedience in which he had been trained, forbade his attempting to do so; and he sought his dreary hiding-place once again, resolved there to remain till the time arrived when he should be compelled to leave it. Here he lay, revolving in his mind all the perils of his situation. He had learned from Antonio that the officers of justice were upon the look out; and he dreaded, that after he had given his father the signal not to approach, he should be seized upon by some one of them. But above every thing, his imagination was filled with terror, lest he should fall into the hands of the Creole, and be subjected to his vengeance.

His fears increased to such a degree, that he seemed at last to have lost the power of motion; when, at the close of day, just at the time when it was necessary to put himself in action, the thought struck him, that by some chance or other, something might have occurred to prevent his father's coming to the appointed spot, and it would not be necessary for him to ascend the mount.

Cheered with this hope, he roused himself, and getting up, he crept cautiously from his hiding-place to the door to look out, but from the position in which the house stood he could not obtain a view of the sea; casting his eyes around, he observed, a little way off, an old tree, which he climbed up with ease, and from the top of it beheld the ocean, and on its calm and tranquil bosom, his father's ship! the sails unfurled, and evidently waiting for the signal. All hope was at once at an end, and nothing remained for Charles but to do his duty. He prepared to descend the tree, when casting his eyes towards the mangrove-wood, he thought he discerned, as well as the imperfect light and the distance allowed, two men emerge from its dark recesses, who, after casting a hasty glance in the direction of the sea, retreated again into their hiding place. Charles got down, he hardly knew how, and supporting himself against the trunk of the tree, remained in deep thought. His first reflection was, that there were certainly people on the watch; and his next, would it be possible for him to do what was required of him

without being seen? he thought not. He then considered, that whichever way he decided to act, he was exposed to suffering: if, in order to escape from Antonio, he did not fulfil his father's orders, he was sure of severe punishment from him; and on the other hand, should he obey him, he ran a risk, amounting to a certainty in his mind, of being seized upon and carried off by Antonio. At the present moment the first evil appeared to him the least, and he determined to steal away, and hiding himself far in the country, remain there for several days, subsisting on anything chance might provide, till he thought the first ebullitions of Harvey's anger would be passed, and then proceed to St. Augustine, where he would find out Cognac, and consult with him as to the best method of reaching his home. Upon coming to this conclusion, he felt as though a heavy weight had been removed from his mind, and raising himself up, he was on the point of springing forward to effect his retreat, when a sudden thought rushed into his mind and held him fixed to the spot where he stood—his mother! he thought of her; and how she might be affected by his decision. He reflected, that it was possible that Harvey might attribute to accident the not seeing the signal of the scarlet cloak, and that no warning being given to deter him from landing, he might still come, and upon his arrival on shore, be taken prisoner and carried off, while Antonio would seize upon the ship, and sail away to put his threats towards Anna into execution.

No sooner had Charles reflected upon the probability of such a chance taking place, than he resolved to remain at all risks to himself, and ascend the mount, and not only give the signal that there was danger ashore that night, but to remain on or near the spot till sun-rise the next morning, to repeat it again, to show that the scheme must for the present be altogether abandoned. From this moment a great portion of Charles's native courage returned, and with a bold step he went back to the ruined house, and gathering together some moss and his bundle of sticks, resolutely proceeded towards the mount, the idea that he was acting as a protector to his mother, cheering and encouraging him on the way.

He passed on without molestation, and arrived at the mount just as the sun sank below the horizon, and day-light was succeeded by sudden darkness. The twilight which renders English summer evenings delightful, is almost unknown in climates bordering on the tropics; and the short period of doubtful light which succeeds to sunset in Florida, was this night wholly obscured by the gathering of black clouds, that threatened an approaching storm. Thus involved in total darkness, Charles had to grope his way up the mount. He had not ascended above half way, when the sound of voices whispering reached his ear; he stopped short, and listened attentively for some moments, but not hearing a repetition of the sounds, he concluded he had been

mistaken, and proceeded on his way. He arrived at the highest point of the mount, and carefully placing ready his materials for a fire, he drew his tinder-box from his pocket, and striking a light, applied a match to them. But whether it was from agitation, or that the moss he had selected from the heap was damp, the fire would not kindle. Again and again he struck a light, and attempted to set fire to the pile of wood; all his endeavours seemed vain; when at length a sudden breeze springing up, a flame at once burst forth, that sent its flashing light on everything around. At that moment, half-way down the mount on the opposite side to where he stood, Charles discerned two men, one of whom was Antonio! In an instant he threw himself on the ground, hoping to escape detection; for momentary as the glimpse had been, he had observed that the faces of the two men had not been turned in his direction. Here he lay immoveable, not daring to rise, lest the outline of his figure should be discernible in the light of the fire. He had not remained long in this position when the sound of voices again arrested his attention, and he heard Antonio exclaim, "Thank Saint Jago, the signal is at last given, and we shall have him here presently, the officers are below among the mangroves, ready to seize upon him. But we must have the boy; where can he be—it is strange that he could have ascended the mount without our perceiving him! It is evident that he must be near

at hand, as he has given the signal, for signal I conclude it must be, a fire lit in such a place and at such a time, although I do not know what was agreed upon between them; but of this I am certain, this was to be the spot whence the signal was to be made, and I am equally certain that my vengeance will only be half satisfied, if that little canting urchin escapes."

"He cannot escape," replied his companion; "he must be on the other side the fire; remain you there, and I will go round, and it will be strange if he escape us." So saying, he advanced in the direction where Charles was, and so suddenly did he come upon him, that before the boy had made up his mind what to do, his cloak brushed him as he lay on the ground. Charles gave himself up for lost, and in an agony of fear, expected every moment that the tall figure beside him would seize hold of him. But to his surprise and delight, the man passed on, making his way up to a bush at some little distance off, which he appeared to have mistaken for his intended captive. In an instant Charles darted forward, and creeping on his hands and knees, stopped not till he got to the bottom of the mount, when getting on his legs, he ran on in an opposite direction till he was obliged to stop and take breath; when fancying himself out of reach of danger, he turned and looked about to try and discover whereabouts he was, but no object was discernible in the profound darkness of the night, except the expiring

flicker of the signal fire on the distant mount, which seemed struggling to keep alive, amidst a pelting shower, which was now beginning to descend.

"At any rate," said Charles to himself, as he looked towards the spot which had lately been the scene of so much dread and anxiety to him, "my fire has lasted long enough to give warning at sea, and my mother is safe for the present;" and, passing on, he was fortunate enough to arrive, after a time, at the avenue of dogwood that had sheltered him in the morning from the sun's rays, and which he now gladly entered, to obtain protection from the overwhelming effects of a tropical storm. Here, in perfect security from the rain, he wandered on for some way, till, feeling overcome with fatigue, he lay down and fell asleep.

Florida, unlike the generality of hot countries, is but little infested with reptiles; they, together with their eggs or young ones, being constantly destroyed by hunting-parties of the Creek Indians setting fire to the grass, when in pursuit of their game.

After a time, Charles awoke, and, getting up, listened attentively to hear if any one was near; for he feared, that, secure as his hiding-place appeared, Antonio might still find him out; but everything seeming safe and quiet, with the exception of the rain, which beat loudly upon, without penetrating, his green canopy, he first addressed himself in gratitude to the Great Being who had preserved him safe amidst great peril, and then, with a glow of satis-

faction at having done his duty, he composed himself again to sleep, and did not wake till an hour before day-break, when, recollecting that his task was but in part performed, he sought about, as well as the darkness would allow, for some dry boughs, which, with some difficulty, he managed to break off; and then, gathering together a handful or two of dead leaves, he groped his way back to the entrance of the avenue, where he stood waiting till the faint indications of coming day warned him that the sun was about to rise. The morning was tempestuous, the wind was high, and the rough billows broke loudly on the shore; but, amidst the din of nature, Charles thought he discerned the creaking of masts, as of a vessel in a storm; and he feared that, notwithstanding all his precaution, his father was approaching land. He hastened forward to ascertain if what he dreaded was true, when, raising his eyes towards the sky, he perceived that the noise he had heard proceeded from a large flight of Savannah cranes, who were sallying forth at early dawn in pursuit of their prey; their immense wings, in slow and regular strokes, all falling and rising at the same moment, resembling the sound of a ship working in a tempestuous sea.

Charles proceeded onwards, and reached the top of the mount just as the sun, surrounded by black heavy-looking clouds, emerged from the horizon.

Chapter VII.

On Charles's arrival at the mount, he looked forward in the direction where, on the preceding evening, Harvey's ship had been stationed, but the vessel was no longer there; but further on, to the right, he discerned two ships, and, taking out his telescope, he discovered that the one in advance was his father's, and that it was closely pursued by the other. In a few moments he heard the sound of firing, and, when the smoke cleared away, it was evident that the enemy was fast gaining ground, and that in a short time all escape would be impossible.

"It is all over with the sloop, and they will have my mother after all!" exclaimed Charles, in a tone of agony,—"but stay,—stay," continued he, as, on raising the glass again to his eyes, he observed that a volley of fire from Harvey made the enemy reel; "she may get clear yet; but no, no,—her mast is down! that return fire has swept it clean away. Oh! what shall I do?—cannot I save her?" and, rushing down the mount, he flew off in the direction of St. Augustine, in order to find Cognac, and beg him to use means instantly of sending him home, that he might bid his mother fly from the place where she was threatened with such imminent danger. In a state of pitiable trepidation, he paced

about the streets of the capital, inquiring of every one he met, if they could tell him where Cognac lived; but no one to whom he addressed himself knew of such a person; and it was not till above an hour after his arrival, that he at last discovered his abode. But, for any benefit he derived from the knowledge, he might quite as well not have found it; for Cognac, intent upon waiting upon some customers, paid him not the slightest attention, and Charles left his house in despair of obtaining any assistance from him. He passed again into the streets, when it occurred to him that he would go down to the harbour, and see if, by any fortunate chance, a vessel was going in the direction of his home, the master of which would take pity on his distress, and set him at least partly on his way. With a tearful countenance, and plaintive voice, Charles addressed himself to the masters and captains, but without success; for of the few who had the good nature or patience to listen to a child's tale of distress, none were bound in the direction in which he wanted to go. Still he continued to hope, and he remained on the quay till the close of day, when hunger and weariness at last compelled him to leave the spot, and go in search of food. He bent his steps, as was natural, to the residence of Cognac, who, as a man known to his father, he hoped would provide him with sustenance, and allow him to sleep at his house till he could obtain the means of reaching home. But here he was also doomed to meet with dis-

appointment, for Cognac never did a kind action from motives of benevolence, and, looking upon the father now as a ruined man, thought the son wholly beneath consideration, and, returning a rude answer to Charles's petition, bade him begone and never come near him again. Thus left to his own resources, Charles wandered forth into the country, where he succeeded in finding both food and shelter for the night. The following morning he proceeded again to the harbour, and again told his piteous tale, and solicited assistance, but he met with no better success than on the day before; and, though he passed the succeeding and many following days in making the same inquiries, he was not the least nearer obtaining the object he had in view.

One evening, as he was returning to the woods to sleep, his heart bursting with grief at the thought of the probable fate of his mother, and the bitter reflection that he should never see her or his pleasant home again; he stopped for a moment to look what the time was, by the church clock that he passed in his way, when a man, muffled up in a large cloak, issued from behind one of the buttresses,, and, advancing towards him, tapped him on the shoulder and made a sign for him to follow. Charles felt alarmed, and quickly retreating a few steps, would have fled; but the man caught hold of him to detain him, and, desiring him in a low tone of voice not to be frightened, lowered his cloak from off his face, and,

to Charles's unspeakable joy, he beheld the friendly face of old Malo.

"Hush!" said he; "do not speak, but follow me."

Charles obeyed, and followed the Indian in silence along the chief part of the town, when, unable longer to restrain himself, he sprang forward, and, catching hold of Malo, begged him to tell him where his mother was.

"Silence!" cried the Indian; "silence!" repeated he, lowering his voice, "a price is set upon your father's head, and want of caution may betray him;" so saying, he paced on with rapid strides, and Charles was constrained to follow, still ignorant of the fate of his beloved mother, till, having passed the outskirts of the town, he could bear the suspense no longer; and, catching hold of the Indian's hand, implored him, with tears, to give him some information concerning her. Malo was going to shake him off and impose silence, as before, when, moved by his grief, he said, in low tones, "She is safe and well; but, if you value the security of us all, do not speak till I give you leave."

"Oh, joy,—joy!" cried Charles, clapping his hands; "my mother is safe, and I shall see her again. Dear, dear mother! I shall be with you once more; thank you, thank you, Malo, for your good news;" but the Indian, thinking that the best method of checking Charles's loud but most natural

expressions of delight, had proceeded on his way, and, by the time Charles rejoined him, the little boy recollected that silence had been enjoined, and he resolutely put a restraint upon himself; although he longed to ask a thousand questions, as to where his mother was, when he should see her, and to what place the Indian was conducting him.

The sun had been long set, and, guided by the light of the moon, they had travelled many miles into the interior of the country, choosing the most lonely paths and unfrequented ways, when at length Malo stopped at the entrance of a pine-barren, and, desiring Charles to seat himself on the trunk of a fallen fir that offered a convenient resting-place, he drew from a pouch which he carried concealed beneath his cloak, some slices of cold meat, and some bread-cakes; and he also produced from the ample pocket of the rough shooting-jacket in which he was attired, two leather bottles, filled with a pleasant wine recently made from the juice of the palm-tree. A great deal of the wine used in Florida is obtained from the sap of trees; it is drawn from them in abundance, and left to ferment, and in a day or two is fit to drink. When fresh, that is, two or three days old, this wine is very good, but changes, and becomes sour, if kept much beyond a week.

Charles, who had not eaten anything since morning, was rejoiced at the sight of the provisions, and gratefully received the portion assigned him by Malo; and, having drunk part of the contents of the

smallest bottle, he felt very much refreshed, and, in answer to Malo's inquiry, if he felt strong enough to continue his walk, he replied, "That he could go many miles further; at least," added he, "if you will tell me that I shall then see my mother."

The Indian replied, "That he would soon have that pleasure;" and then, bidding him draw near, he said he would inform him of all the circumstances that had transpired since he left home; but first he desired Charles to let him know his adventures; which request the child having complied with, Malo proceeded to tell him, that, as soon as he heard of Antonio's sudden disappearance at the time Harvey was to set sail with the spirits for the neighbourhood of St. Augustine, he began to suspect that he was gone off for no good purpose, and upon further reflection, he became confirmed in this suspicion. He called to mind several half-muttered threats that had at times escaped him, and he remembered his having, more than once, asked him himself, if he did not think that Harvey had a considerable treasure concealed somewhere about his dwelling, and in what place he thought it was deposited.

"I had reason, too, to suppose," said Malo, continuing his narration, "that the Creole bore your mother, gentle and amiable creature as she is, no good-will, and myself I know he disliked; so I thought, should it be his intention, as I considered it most likely was, to return and ransack the dwelling

in your father's absence, we should receive but poor usage at his hands, especially if we attempted any defence; so, soon after you and the captain had sailed, I communicated my notion to your mother, and persuaded her to pack up as much as we two could carry, of what was valuable in the house, together with a stock of provisions, and a gun, and we soon found ourselves on the way to the cave a few miles along the shore, going northwards, where, as you know, we have often, with your father, taken up a temporary abode, when we have been from home catching turtle, or been out on some hunting or shooting excursion. We arrived there without experiencing any interruption; and, having placed a heap of dry moss in the inner cave for your mother to repose on, I stationed myself to watch near the entrance of the outer cave; for, though tired, I thought it better not to sleep till she awoke, and could take her turn in watching. The next day, we agreed that I should return, taking care to avoid observation, and, without going very near, endeavour to find out if all was as usual at home, or if any attack had been made there. This I continued to do every morning for several days, and always finding everything safe, for latterly I went up to and into the house—"

"And did you look at and feed my pets?" eagerly interrupted Charles.

"Yes, I did," replied Malo; "but your mother had, before we set out, given them a supply of food and water sufficient to last them many days. But,

to continue my history, as I was saying, always finding everything safe, I began to think my fears were unfounded, and that perhaps it might be as well that your mother should quit her inconvenient abode and return to the comforts of her home; when, one morning, just after I had risen and had gone to the entrance of the cave, to look out if there was any ship on the sea, I was startled by a loud noise, as of the explosion of gunpowder, and, hastening to the top of a mound of rising ground, not far off, and, looking in the direction of your home, I beheld—volumes of smoke and flames bursting from the house and outbuildings."

"Oh! how dreadful!" exclaimed Charles; "and my poor pets,—they would all be destroyed!—my playful monax, my faithful racoon! and my pretty birds, all,—all of them would be killed!"

"But thank the Great Power, child," said the Indian, "that preserved your mother from death, or a more wretched fate; thank Him for His mercy."

"Oh! I do,—I do," exclaimed Charles, "I am most grateful, and I thank you, dear, good Malo, for your wise thoughts and kind care of her; but—but—" Charles could not conclude what he was going to say, for, overcome with the various emotions he had lately experienced, and the natural grief of a child for the destruction of his home, and the loss of his favourites, he burst into tears, and continued sobbing till the Indian interrupted him by saying that, if he would leave off crying, he would resume

his narration. Charles made an effort to subdue his grief, and, drying his tears, listened to Malo, who proceeded thus:—"Your mother and I could not for a moment doubt but that the house had been utterly destroyed, and we conjectured that the loud explosion we had heard was in consequence of the fire having communicated with the reservoir of gunpowder which the captain had on the premises. The next morning, for your mother kindly thought it might not be safe for me to go before, I went to the spot, and there, too surely, we found our conjectures were right. Not a vestige remained of that once pretty abode but a mass of ashes and ruins. Whether the contents of the house were carried off or not, I cannot tell; but of the live stock none were left, and it is unlikely that villains, who went on so cowardly and wicked an expedition, would leave anything of value behind them. All that remained, to remind me of what had once been, was the hickory-tree that shaded the house, standing alone, scorched, but not burnt down; and, further off, the boat, in which you used to pass over to the orange-island."

Charles heaved a deep sigh, and covering his face with his hands, tried to hide the tears which were fast flowing down his cheeks, without his having the power to stop them.

"My own heart felt big at the sight," said the old man, as he made some rough attempts to caress and console the crying child; "but an Indian does not weep."

"I will think of my mother, and the happiness of seeing her," said Charles, endeavouring to check his emotion; "but," continued he, as the recollection of Harvey suddenly crossed his mind, "what will my father say to me, when he sees me?"

"I have not yet had time to tell you about him," replied Malo, "but you shall hear: when our worst fears of the base designs of Antonio seemed thus to receive confirmation, your mother became excessively anxious lest any treachery should have been used towards the captain, and that you should have been involved in it. Her anxiety on your account has been extreme, and all sorrow for the loss of her home seemed absorbed in that one feeling. You may judge then how she felt, when one evening your father entered the cave alone, and told her that he had neither seen nor heard anything of you since he put you on shore near St. Augustine, the day he proposed landing the cargo of spirits. Poor soul! she was like one frantic; and I could only console her in some degree, by telling her, that very probably you were with Cognac at St. Augustine, and that I would proceed there in search of you; and I was offering to set off immediately, when your father stopped me, and told me we might as well all travel together. He then informed us, as you know, that no signal was given at night; and that before day-light next morning, he found himself pursued by an enemy, from whom he only escaped by jumping into the ship's boat, and under cover of the

enemy's smoke running ashore; and springing out, he contrived to hide himself from his pursuers, first among the rocks, and then in the interior of the country. In a few days' time, it appeared that his enemies gave over the search, and he set off in quest of home, which he reached to find a heap of ruins. He then bent his steps to our retreat, where he imagined, if we had escaped destruction, we should probably be. Your mother, good soul, congratulated him on his escape; and we showed him the little stock of articles we had brought away with us when we left the house. It was of no great value; for, as perhaps you know, the remains of your mother's once large collection of gems, had at different times been turned into money by the captain, since his late unproductive voyages."

"I suppose my father is very sorry the house is burned," said Charles; "but," continued he, in anxious tones, "is he angry with me?"

"With respect to the house," answered the Indian, "he does not regret it, for he could no longer have lived there, for Antonio has betrayed him, and persons are on the look-out for him, and a large sum is offered for bringing him to justice, as he is considered one of the most noted pirates in these seas. For yourself, I fear you must expect but a rough reception, for he traces all his misfortunes up to you—to your having given him a load of merchandise for regular traffic. It is all, he says, owing to that circumstance, that his schooner was burned; and his

schooner being gone, he was obliged to make his voyages in the sloop; and the sloop not being so fast a sailer, he was overtaken, and to save himself, was obliged to quit the vessel. Had he, he keeps saying, but been in his favourite ship, he would have cut like a bird through the waves, and soon have left his enemy far behind."

"I feared," said Charles, after a pause, during which many painful thoughts crossed his mind, "I feared that my father would be very angry at the loss of his vessel; but, pray Malo, what does he intend to do; how will he get a livelihood, now that he has no ship?"

"I don't know, indeed," replied Malo, "but he says he must try his fortune in another part of the country; and sometimes he talks of leaving America altogether, and going to England; this last plan your mother would like best, for England she says is her native conntry, and she would like to see it again; but," added Malo, "I don't suppose her wishes will make any difference with the captain."

"And now, Malo, when shall we go to my mother; I am quite rested, where is she?"

"She is now with your father waiting for us, a few miles further in the country. We all travelled together as far as the place where I left them, which is near upon a straight line with the capital; they are engaged by the side of a creek in catching and drying fish for food on the journey; and your father

consented to wait while I went in search of you, provided that I was not gone too long."

"How good of you," exclaimed Charles, "to have taken so much trouble, and how fortunate for me that you should have met with me at St. Augustine."

"I had only just arrived in the town," replied the Indian, "and was standing under the shadow of the church, thinking where I had better search for you first, when I saw you coming along. It was a lucky chance, for I did not dare inquire for you at Cognac's; and I feared every instant that some of the men who are trying to catch your father, would know us to belong to him, and follow where we went to find out his hiding-place;—now let us set off to join your parents."

Charles sprang up, and delighted with the thought of soon seeing his mother, he walked on stoutly by the side of Malo, and did not once stop to rest, till he arrived at the little tent, at the entrance of which, he found his mother anxiously watching.

Happy was the meeting between Anna and her beloved child, all thoughts of past danger and future troubles were lost in the pleasure of seeing each other. But in the midst of their joy, they did not forget the old Indian; and Anna, after heartily thanking him for his kindness and good-nature, hastened to set before him the best refreshments the tent afforded.

Charles was too happy to eat; and while Malo was making his supper, he told all his adventures to

his mother, and he was able to do so without interruption, as Harvey was happily asleep; and it was not till the next morning that he encountered him, when he had to relate over again all that had passed since they had parted, and in return receive the accustomed portion of ill-will and anger with which his father always met him after any misfortune had attended himself. Anna, with her usual gentleness, interposed to soften Harvey's asperity towards the poor child; and in this instance she succeeded better than usual, for she in some measure persuaded her husband to think that Charles had acted with caution and good judgment in the important business that had been confided to him; and she brought him to acknowledge that it was owing to the fortunate circumstance of the boy perfectly understanding the French language, that he himself had been saved from imminent peril. She could have added, but she did not, for it would have been of no use, that if he had kept his promise to Charles, on a memorable occasion, he would not have drawn upon himself the series of misfortunes which he now so bitterly lamented.

It was a fortunate circumstance for the family, that a tent of a light and convenient description, together with a gun and some ammunition, had been left in the cave where Anna and the Indian had taken refuge; they had been forgotten and left behind after one of Harvey's shooting excursions, and were now found lying quite safe in the cleft of a rock, where they had been deposited. This tent

would afford shelter by night, and the gun would be of material importance in helping to provide sustenanee through the journey, for Harvey had now decided that he would travel through the country till they reached the Gulf of Mexico, from whence he hoped to be able to take shipping for England. He preferred this plan to proceeding along the Atlantic side of the coast, as he thought he should be less likely to be known by taking this way.

The old Indian, soon after he had restored Charles to his mother, quitted the travelling party to join his tribe, having first taken kind leave of Anna and her little charge.

Harvey certainly bore his reverse of fortune with a very ill grace, but Charles proved so very useful to him, and he was so glad to avail himself of the boy's quickness and dexterity, in assisting him in the pursuit of game, fish, and whatever provision the country afforded, in collecting fuel to cook with, in pitching the tent, gathering moss to repose on, and various other services, that he treated him with rather less than his accustomed severity during this journey. Charles, too, travelled in the much-loved company of his mother, whose judicious advice aided, and whose kindness soothed him in many of his troubles; and it was Charles's delight to endeavour to lessen, to the utmost of his power, the fatigue of the toilsome journey. He always wanted to carry a part of the burden allotted to her; he sought

with eagerness for cool and refreshing fruits to allay her thirst; he strove to guide her in the easiest paths, and selected for her the pleasantest shade to repose under when halting at noon; and many other little attentions he paid her, which, if not of material importance as regarded her ease and comfort, yet by evincing Charles's affectionate and amiable disposition, tended greatly to cheer and help her on her dreary way.

No event of sufficient importance to relate occurred to the travellers during their journey, and on their arrival at a sea-port of the gulf of Mexico, Harvey fell in with an acquaintance, a sailor belonging to a ship bound for England, and through his recommendation, Harvey got employment in the same vessel. The few articles of value which Anna had brought away from the house previous to its destruction, together with a favourite diamond ring of Harvey's, which he had preserved through all his reverses of fortune, were turned into money to pay for Anna's and the child's passage, and to provide such articles of clothing as would be indispensable during the voyage.

Contrary winds and bad weather rendered the voyage tedious and unpleasant, but Anna beguiled the time by resuming, as well as circumstances allowed, her instructions to Charles. Some passengers on board, pleased with the quiet and gentle demeanour of mother and child, lent them some improving books, which formed sources of useful

study to the little boy, especially some volumes written in a pleasing and familiar style, on the history, laws and institutions of the far famed country to which he was bound.

Harvey, in the mean time, was engaged in sullily performing the duties of a common sailor, and keenly did he, who had once been the master and commander of ships of his own, feel the drudgery and degradation of his situation; and it was only towards the latter part of the voyage, when he became intimate with one of the inferior officers of the ship, that something of his former spirits seemed to revive. This man, like Harvey, had been engaged in illicit traffic, and like him, too, had experienced reverses of fortune, which compelled him to adopt for a time a regular line of life. Of this, however, he was now heartily tired, and having saved a small sum of money, he determined at all risks to quit the ship in which he was then serving, and associate himself once more with a band of smugglers; and thinking that in Harvey he should find an intelligent and useful companion, he communicatad his intentions to him. This was the very thing that Harvey wanted; a stranger to England, he was quite at a loss where to fix to the greatest advantage, neither could he tell which part of the coast was best adapted to the safety of traffickers in contraband goods. It was, therefore, agreed that Harvey should put himself under the guidance of his new friend, Brown. Accordingly, after the ship had arrived in

port, and the crew had received their pay, the party, by Brown's desire, proceeded to a lonely spot on the Essex coast, in the neighbourhood of a very small sea-port, called L.

Brown fixed on this situation, both from its solitariness, and its being a favourite place of resort for smugglers; besides, its local position, being on the river Thames, rendered access to London easy. Here, then, Harvey pitched his tent, and leaving Anna and Charles to make the best arrangements they could for the comfort of the party, he walked forth with his new friend to reconnoitre. They wandered on in the direction of the town, and as they drew near the custom-house, they observed a man idling about, who, as Brown approached, came forward and claimed him as an old acquaintance. He expressed surprise at seeing Brown in England, and when the greetings were over, he seemed as though he wished to speak to him in private, when Brown introduced Harvey as a friend, before whom he might speak freely. The two acquaintances then began to relate their past adventures, and to question each other as to their present plans and views. In answer to some questions Brown put respecting smuggling, the stranger shook his head, and said that the land-sharks, meaning the officers of the preventive service, were so active in that neighbourhood, that the *trade* was now a bad one; and he added, that he, with a friend of his, were about to enter upon a more profitable line of business, if they

could find some fine-spirited fellows to join them. The conversation was here interrupted by another man, who came to summon the last speaker to dinner, and Brown having to search for a lodging, Harvey returned to the tent.

The next, and many succeeding days, were passed by Harvey in the company of Brown; and though through his means he was introduced to the companionship of the idle and the dissolute, still no scheme had yet been devised for entering upon a regular system of unlawful traffic; and Harvey, who had nearly run through all the money he had, was beginning to feel that his situation was getting desperate, and that something must speedily be done to obtain, not, as heretofore, the luxuries of life, but food to preserve himself and family from absolute starvation.

"Nothing," said Brown to Harvey, one morning, as soon as they met, "nothing is to be done here, it seems; at any rate, at present;—no chance of seeing Larkins; captain Larkins, you know, who I told you was master of as pretty a craft as sails upon the water, and who would have been sure to have set us up in business. No hope of him: I have just heard that he has been trapped on the Sussex coast. Poor fellow! he was a brave, generous soul; and I wish his enemies had been in his place——"

"Ah, yes; very true," interrupted Harvey, "but as he is provided for, no matter how, and we are

not, let us talk of ourselves, and of what we are to do."

"Ay, that's the thing," said Brown; "here we are, a set of men, all ready for enterprise, but then where's our ship? and we are all so poor, there's no money among us; but give us a ship, and with you, my fine fellow, for our captain, what deeds we would do! what riches should we gain! what——"

"Well, well," again interrupted Harvey impatiently, "but what *is* to be done? What are we to do to-day, to-morrow, and next day, for subsistence; for the bare necessaries of life? I have, and I care not who knows it, but a few shillings remaining."

"You have many sympathizing friends," said Brown, as, with a doleful smile, he held up an empty purse; "but," added he, after a short pause, during which he appeared to have been deeply thinking, "I have made up my mind as to what I myself will do; this news about Larkins has quite determined me. I will go to London, and join my friend Jones; he whom we met near the custom-house, the first day we went to L.; he has been trying to get me to him for some time; I will go and see if he has anything that will suit me; any little job, that may, as it were, stop a gap for the present. You, I know, have but little taste for land enterprise; water is your element; but, my good fellow, you must do something, and should

anything occur that would be likely to turn out profitably for you, depend upon it, I will let you know. Besides, should you be wanted, you would not refuse, I am sure, to lend a friend a helping hand: you would come, would you not?" continued Brown inquiringly. "Jones liked you prodigiously."

Harvey made no reply.

"Well," added Brown, "you will think about it, and I will write to you; so inquire at the post-office every morning if there is any letter for you; it will be something for you to do, to walk over to R., the post-town, every day: and now, good morning to you, I must be off. I am going by the steam-boat, and if I stay longer talking I shall be too late." So saying, he shook hands with Harvey, and hastened away to embark for London; while Harvey continued, with dull and heavy tread, to pace along the shore; his mind oppressed with dark and gloomy thoughts.

"They want me," at length said he to himself, "to join a set of house-breakers. I see clearly that is their scheme; and they want me to be one of them, because they think me bold and daring; but I have no taste for that sort of work, and I have no inclination to make one in a set of thieves: it is not that my conscience is over nice; no, for I have made myself master of many a treasure by no other right than that of superior strength;—ay, and more than that; many a wife have I deprived of her

husband, and mother of her child, as, pursuing my calling, they have fallen beneath the fire of my ship; but, to become a thief is what I never can——a thief!" again repeated he to himself; "the word has an ugly sound; yet, what else have I been all my life? My robberies were on the wide ocean, and there was a wildness in the life I led; there was danger, and there was daring, but still, what was I but a robber? A robber on the wide ocean—on the ocean; yes, there was the charm! I love the sea." And, as he said this, he raised his head and looked on the scene before him; and, used as he had been to varied and beautiful prospects, he could not help being struck by the one he then gazed upon. He had just reached a small watering-place on the coast; on the left, high up on a cliff, stood a range of buildings, whose white fronts showed in strong relief against the cloudless blue of a midsummer noon; before the houses extended a terrace, from the edge of which, descending to the very water's side, was a green and luxuriant shrubbery, through which ran divers meandering paths, with here and there a rustic seat, to repose on. To the right, across the channel, lay the Isle of Thanet, and the distant coast of Kent; and in front, following the course of the river, was the Nore, where the majestic Thames leaps into the German ocean. The tide was flowing in, and a gentle breeze curled the green waves that danced and sparkled in the sun's bright rays, as, with soft lulling sound, they broke upon the pebbly

shore. The river itself presented a striking object; it was covered with vessels of almost every denomination, and from almost every part of the world; far away in the offing shimmered the white sails of a West Indian fleet; nearer in view, passed a train of colliers, from the north of England, over whose swelling canvass flitted, in varied succession, the richest shades of red and brown. Here, with majestic sweep, passed on the stately China-man; there, scudded swift before the breeze, the light fishing-boat; and every now and then came streaming by, with its long black line of smoke, and its busy rattle, the ponderous steam-packet, bearing along a self-important throng, in pursuit of either health or pleasure. Nearer the shore sailed the gay pleasure-boat; its coloured pennon waving in the air, keeping time, as it were, to the soft music on its deck.

Harvey was lost in contemplation, but at length rousing himself, he exclaimed aloud, "What a scene is this! What a tale it tells of wealth and industry;—what treasures are wafted along the bosom of this noble river! What riches the owners of those ships possess, and by what days of toil have they been accumulated; and all by honest means. Yes, however they have laboured, they are men who can boldly face the day, and are not obliged to sculk in hiding-places, oppressed by the constant fear of losing either their property or their liberty, and ending, at last, by being driven, as exiles, from their country. Wealth and power were once mine, and

might have been so still, had not rapacity grown with my riches; but, I never knew what it was to exercise self-control; from childhood I have ever been under the dominion of my passions. My father," continued Harvey, still pursuing his melancholy reflections, "placed me early in life in a creditable situation, and afforded me ample means of obtaining an honourable livelihood; but, deaf to all his remonstrances, I squandered in waste the sums of money his liberality bestowed on me, and then I stifled all feelings of remorse in the society of wild and disorderly associates. It is true, I never had a mother to place and keep me in the right path: and the gentle counsels of my wife came too late to produce any efficient change in one who had so long been the slave of his own unruly will. There is no recalling the past,—no; power, riches, reputation, home, all are lost to me for ever: and here I now stand, a wretched wanderer, on a foreign shore, without a house to shelter me, or the means of supporting life. Something must be done, and that speedily too; I am not in a situation to choose:—I suppose I must—but, I will think no more at present." And, with this determination, he hurried from a spot that had been the source of long and painful meditation, to procure a temporary oblivion of his woes, in copious draughts of intoxicating liquors.

Chapter VIII.

It was late in the evening before Harvey rejoined his wife and child; they had been watching for his return, and were standing on the beach, not far from the tent, and upon his approach they went forward to meet him.

"I fear you will have a bad supper to-night," said Anna; "there is no bread, and we have only some small shell-fish, which the child and I caught at low water; have you," inquired she, in a hesitating manner, "any money to buy bread?"

Harvey made no reply; but, feeling in his pocket, pulled out sixpence, which he gave to Charles, and bade him go and fetch some bread. The boy obeyed; and, while he was gone, Harvey and his wife paced slowly and silently up and down the sea-shore. A dark gloomy evening had succeeded the bright summer's day,—no unusual circumstance in England's changeable climate; the air was damp and heavy; black clouds overhung the horizon, and a few large rain-drops were beginning to fall. Anna felt chilly, and melancholy thoughts oppressed her mind; and, though she feared, from Harvey's manner, that he was in no favourable mood to listen to her, she determined to renew a subject on which she had already many times spoken since their arrival in England.

"Harvey," said she, in a low and subdued to-

of voice, "are you prepared to give consent to my proposal? our mode of living here, to say the least of it, is very uncomfortable; we are without employment, without sufficient food, and without proper shelter from this variable climate. I am already ill; and I fear, without some change, I shall soon be incapable of any exertion, and become only a burden to those about me."—Anna paused; but Harvey only preserving a moody silence, she continued; "Do, Harvey, let us go into the neighbourhood where my father lived; for, though he was unfortunate, he left no debts behind, and quitted the country with a fair name; let us go there, for surely some of his old friends would give employment to his daughter, if she besought it. I am willing and able to work, and the profits of my needle would keep us from absolute want, and I might in time——"

"What," exclaimed Harvey, interrupting her, and casting on her a look of the utmost contempt, "would you turn me into a land-lubber, living on the pitiful gains of a village sempstress? I—I who have had the vast ocean for my empire."

"Well, then," replied Anna, "you could go to sea, while I would strive to obtain a maintenance for myself and the child: the captain we sailed with, you know, would be very willing to have you with him again."

"Ay, and so he might; but you know, or you ought to know by this time, Anna, that I was born

to command, and not to obey. No: I would die sooner than submit again to go through what I did in coming here." And then, as though he had condescended too greatly in explaining thus much of his feelings to his wife, he waved his hand, and imperiously commanded silence. But Anna knew that she had right on her side, and was deeply concerned in the subject; not so much on her own account as on that of her little charge, whose interests she had bound herself ever to maintain, to the utmost of her power; she would not, therefore, suffer the subject to drop this time, as it had done many times before; and, after waiting a few moments, she gently laid her hand on her husband's arm, and said,

"Since I have been your wife, Harvey, I have been little in the habit of opposing your will; and, in this instance, were I alone concerned, I would say nothing further on the subject; but that child, on whom I have bestowed so much pains, and whom I have never ceased to hope may one day be restored to his proper station in life, I cannot bear to see him suffering, both in mind and body, from neglect: for his sake——"

"That child, that child!" interrupted Harvey, in a mocking tone of voice, "always something about that child; what care I for him; and what right has he to be considered by me?"

"I have always imagined," said Anna, without taking any notice of this last observation, "that England is his native country, for the advertisements

I begged you to insert in the American newspapers, were never answered; and I now have the wish at heart to advertise here, and without employment how can I obtain the money to do it?"

"Advertise the brat!" exclaimed Harvey, "what, after all the pains you have taken with him, would you part with him? I thought it would break your heart to do so."

"Heaven only knows," answered Anna, with a heavy sigh, "the pain it would be to me to be separated from him; but still it is my duty to endeavour to find out his true parents. He was a beloved object, and the child of much care, I am sure, from his appearance, and from the style of his dress."

"Nonsense," exclaimed Harvey; "let me hear no more about him."

At this moment Charles came running up with the bread, and the conversation dropped. The next morning Harvey went out early; and on his return in the evening, the moment he entered the tent, he threw himself down, and went to sleep for the night; but even had Anna had an opportunity of renewing the conversation, she would not have availed herself of it at present, for she thought it might be best to wait a few days, in order to reflect upon the best means to obtain her end. The following day Harvey was up and out far earlier than usual; and Anna could not help remarking, as he quitted the tent, and took his way along the seashore, that his step was no longer wavering and un-

certain, but that of a man who has some settled purpose in view. And this was the true state of the case; for Harvey, unable longer to bear not only the life of inactivity he led, but to suffer the privations he endured, had resolved upon joining Brown and his confederates in London, if it was possible to find out whereabouts they were; and in the hope of ascertaining this fact, he hastened off to the post-town to inquire if there was any letter for him; and it was with a feeling of satisfaction, not unmixed with a slight sensation of trepidation, that he received from the post-master's hands, one addressed to him, under the fictitious name he had assumed since his arrival in England. He seized the letter, and hurrying to a retired spot, tore it open, and read the contents, which were as follows:—

"I promised not to forget you; but as I have only time to write a line, I can explain nothing, but only tell you, we have *sport* in view. Be with us if possible to-night, and bring with you that active climbing dog, that boy of yours, but leave the woman behind.

Yours,
A friend to the brave,
N. Brown."

Harvey, without a moment's hesitation, decided to accept the invitation; and, in order to lose no time, he hastened to the tent to seek for Charles, for though he could not imagine how the services of

such a child would be required, he resolved at all events to comply with the request contained in the letter, and take him with him.

"Where is Charles?" inquired he angrily of his wife, when upon his arrival he did not perceive him.

"I cannot tell where he is just now," replied Anna, "but he was here a little while ago."

"Which way did he go? the idle brat is never to be found when I want him."

"He has not done anything to make you angry, I hope," said Anna anxiously.

"To be sure he has; is it not enough to make me angry, that he is never in the way when I want him? and I desire you to tell me where he is; I have no doubt you know well enough."

"Indeed I do not," replied Anna, "for I have been very unwell, and have been lying down in the tent, where I fell into a dose."

Harvey was checked in the angry reply that rose to his lips, by the sight of him of whom he was in search. The little boy, with something carefully tied up in his handkerchief, appeared making his way along the muddy shore, for the tide having receded, he had gone out to gather cockles for his mother. Harvey hallooed to him to make haste, and the child came running up, when Harvey said to him, "What have you been after, you young dog, that you were not here when I wanted you?"

"I did not know that you would want me,"

meekly replied Charles, "and my mother looked so thin and ill, that I went to try and find some fish for her, but I cannot contrive to catch any, and I have only brought you these," continued he, advancing towards his mother, and holding out his little present; "I am sure you are very hungry ——"

"Leave off prating," interrupted Harvey, catching hold of the handkerchief, and throwing it from him; "you must come along with me; do ye hear," continued he, laying hold of Charles's arm, and pulling him forward, "you and I are going a journey."

"Oh! where, where are you going to take him," exclaimed Anna; "oh! pray say," continued she, as Harvey moved on without paying any attention to her question.

"Now, cannot you be quiet, and let me take the boy a sail without your making all this disturbance?" at length, replied Harvey, but seeing that by giving no explanation of his plans, he only delayed his departure, for Charles had broken from his grasp, and clinging to his mother, begged that he might stay with her now that she was so ill, he somewhat abated the sternness of his manner, and told Anna that he had just received a letter from a friend, inviting him to come up immediately to London, as he had obtained employment for him.

"But why do you take the child with you?" asked Anna.

"Oh! my friend will get something for him likewise," replied Harvey.

"If that is the case," said Anna, "why am I not to go with you, why must I stay behind?"

"I shall write to you," answered Harvey, "if we remain, and then you can join us;" and with this unsatisfactory answer, Anna was obliged to remain contented, for Harvey would give no further explanation of his plans.

"Write to me, in pity write," exclaimed she, as Harvey broke from the feeble attempt she made to detain him, "surely you will;" but Harvey, dragging Charles forward, was already out of hearing; and Anna, weakened by illness, and overcome with the most painful emotions, sank half-fainting on the beach.

"If," said she to herself, when she began a little to revive, "he would but have had the mercy to have told me a little more of what he is going to do, I should have felt more satisfied; but it is cruel indeed to leave me thus ignorant of his intentions; I fear, I fear he has carried off the child for no good purpose."

In the mean time, Charles's sorrow, though of a somewhat different character, was hardly less acute than Anna's; it was grievous to him to be thus torn from his mother, at a time too when she was so unwell, and when he was so anxious to watch over her, and take care of her, to be carried to a strange place, to be employed he knew not how; besides, the strong gripe with which Harvey held his arm as he almost dragged him along, boded him, he thought,

no good. Upon reaching L., Harvey engaged a friend of Brown's, the master of a sailing vessel, to take Charles and him with him to London, for which place he was on the point of starting just as Harvey came up. The master consented, and wind and tide being favourable, Harvey and the child were landed in London before sunset, when Harvey lost no time in repairing to the spot to which he had been directed—a house of entertainment close to the water-side. He entered, and upon telling his name, and inquiring for Brown, a note was handed to him, the contents of which directed him to put himself under the guidance of Tom the errand-boy, who would conduct him to the place where Brown and his companions were all to meet at night. Accordingly Tom was summoned, and Harvey putting himself and Charles under his direction, the lad led them through dark lanes and crowded streets, to the outskirts of the town; when, entering upon the high road, they kept straight on for two or three miles, till they arrived at a by-road, down which their guide led them, till he brought them on to a common, on the near side of which was a pretty-looking village, with the houses standing either singly, or two or three together, or in pleasant rows, with small gardens before them. Charles was delighted with these pretty-looking English houses and villas, with their green verandahs clustered round with roses, jessamine, and honey-suckles; and as he passed by them, he felt at a loss which to admire

most, but he thought he preferred a small villa which stood quite removed from other buildings; and he paused for a few moments to look how tastefully the garden in front was laid out, with its bright gravel-walk, beautiful flowers, weeping willow, and verdant lawn; and while he was standing to look, two young ladies of about ten and twelve years old, came running forward from under the willow, where they had been sitting, working and reading.

"Oh! there is blind John," exclaimed the eldest girl, as an old man led by a child approached, and stopped at the gate.

"Yes, there he is," said the other sister, "and his grand-daughter with him; they are come for the frock I promised Ellen; I will go and fetch it;" and while she ran into the house, the other young lady came forward, and after kindly inquiring concerning their health, said, "Papa desired me to tell you, John, when you called, that if you will come again next week, he will have a coat for you."

"God bless his honour," exclaimed the blind man, "he is very good; he is the poor man's friend! many is the prayer that is sent up for him to heaven from the habitations of want and sorrow, whose misery his kindness has tended to lessen. God bless him!" and the tears were beginning to roll down his cheeks, when Charles was abruptly called away from witnessing a scene in which he was much interested, by Harvey angrily calling to him not to loiter behind; and hastily rejoining his father, the

guide led them on through the remainder of the village, along a road apparently but little frequented, till he came to a dark green lane, down which he suddenly turned. At the far end of this lane stood a small ugly looking red brick-house, with a sign-post before it, from which was suspended a rough painting of a melancholy-looking figure in a blue jacket and trousers, with a jug of beer in his hand; from which notable daub the house derived its appellation of "The Jolly Tar." The landlord of this public-house had obtained his license for the ostensible purpose of affording refreshment to the brick-makers who worked in the adjoining fields; but in reality to offer a place of resort to idle characters, who lived by committing depredations in the neighbourhood. Here Tom stopped, and bidding Harvey wait outside, he went into the house, and soon returned, followed by Brown, who expressed much satisfaction at seeing Harvey. "I thought you would come," said he; "I thought you had too much spirit to stay where you were, loitering away your days. We have plenty of *game* in view, and our friends are brave, resolute, daring fellows; now, you are all this, and more besides; you have a cool calculating head;—the affair of to-night is between you and me."

"And the boy," inquired Harvey, "whom you bid me bring, what is he to do?"

"He is to go with us to-night," replied Brown; and thinking that Harvey looked as though he felt

doubtful as to Charles's being of any service, he added, "such active acute boys as that, are of great use with us; we slide them down a chimney, or slip them through holes where a man could not go, and employ them in various other ways; and as to that lad," continued he, bestowing on Charles a nod, meant to be at once encouraging and patronising, "we shall soon make him as accomplished a little rogue as ———." Brown stopped short, upon observing a sign from Harvey not to continue what he was saying, for Harvey knowing Charles full well, felt that to render his services available, disguise as to the real nature of their actions must be employed. Brown was not slow in taking a hint, and turning to Harvey, said,

"Have you supped? let us go in, and I will introduce you to our friends; I suppose you have not supped?"

Harvey shook his head, and with an expressive gesture, laid his hand on his empty pocket. "I fear," said he, "I must be indebted ———"

"Say not a word, say not a word," interrupted Brown, "you shall sup with me to-night; and after I have put you in the *right way*, I will sup with you, and a splendid supper you will give me, the choicest viands and the best wines—port and burgundy, eh! my fine fellow, what think you of that?" and clapping his friend on the shoulder, pushed him onwards: and Harvey, with his imagination filled with the idea of burgundy and luxurious fare, stumbled

into the dark dirty little parlour of "The Jolly Tar," where, as far as the fumes of tobacco enabled him to distinguish, he saw two or three ill-looking fellows seated round a table drinking. After suitable introductions had been gone through, Brown called for refreshments; and Harvey, whose appetite was sharpened from long fasting, was very happy to forget for a time the anticipated dainties with which Brown had fed his fancy, and appease his hunger with the coarse food that was spread before him. As to poor Charles, he was too weary both in body and mind, and too uncomfortable in his present position, to allow of his partaking of more than a very small portion of the refreshments that were presented to him. After supper was ended, the confederates began to discuss, in low tones, the business of the meeting; when one of the party, looking towards Charles, observed in a whisper to Brown, that it might not be safe to carry on their discussions in the hearing of one so young. Harvey overheard the whisper, and taking an old dirty-looking volume from off the mantel-piece, threw it towards Charles, saying, "I'll give the young dog a book; if he can but read he'll be quiet enough, and not trouble us."

Charles took the book, and by his father's order retired to a side-table, and placing a dull-burning candle before him, he opened the volume, while the confederates resumed their discourse. But Charles did not read; for though he fixed his eyes on the

page, and mechanically turned over the leaves of his book, a strong sensation of uneasiness, almost amounting to fear, with which he was oppressed, made him very desirous of endeavouring to find out, from the conversation of the persons in the room, for what purpose he had been brought into so strange a situation.

The occurrences of the day had been very singular; he had been dragged away, without any reason being assigned, from his mother, when she was in a very bad state of health; he had been hurried through the streets, and brought into a lonely spot in the country, and was now placed amidst a ruffianly-looking set of men, whose conversation appeared in perfect keeping with their appearauce; for though they spoke low, and a great part of their conversation was carried on in a slang dialect, which to him was as unintelligible as a foreign language, still he gathered sufficient, combined with Brown's speech when he first noticed him, to convince him that he had been brought where he now was, for no good purpose; and he more than suspected that the party assembled were a set of housebreakers, met together to plan fresh outrages upon their peaceable fellow-creatures. As conviction of the truth of these surmises forced itself upon his mind, he grew sick at heart, and his head, which had for some time felt heavy and uncomfortable from the close atmosphere of the room, began to ache intolerably. He got up and rushed out, in the hope that the outer air would revive him; he would have asked for some water,

but he saw no one to whom he could apply. The landlord was engaged in the tap-room serving out beer to a set of shabby-looking men, and there appeared to be no mistress of the house; indeed, there did not appear to be any female about the premises.

Charles seated himself on a bench outside the house, but he did not derive much benefit from the air, as the atmosphere was laden with an oppressive smell from the brick-fields opposite: he would have gone in search of some water, but the night was so dark, that he could not see where to direct his steps, so he sat still, listening either to the low moaning of the wind, the creaking of the sign, or the murmuring voices of the revellers within. By degrees, Charles began to shake off the weight that had oppressed him, and to consider if it would be possible by any effort to escape from his present situation. "But what," he thought, "could he do without money and without friends, even could he succeed in hiding himself from his father; and how would it be possible for him, totally ignorant as he was of the country, to find his way back to his mother?" And then again he thought that it was possible he might be mistaken as to his father's motives in coming here, for he had heard him make use of the words, "gain a livelihood." And yet he feared that could not be the case, for he felt almost certain that he had heard his father and Brown arranging to rob a naval officer in the neighbourhood of his plate and valuables, together with a sum of money, his pay, which he had

just received. They were to do the evil deed that night, as the captain had been suddenly called from his home to attend the death-bed of a near relative, and the house would be left in the care simply of an elderly servant, and two young girls, the officer's daughters. "Yet again," thought Charles, "it is impossible that my father can be so wicked: he never can mean to be so cruel; for though he used to fight at sea, his enemies, as he always called the people in the ships he attacked, used to see him coming, and had a chance of getting away. And then, surely, I am not to be in any way employed in the business —— still I am certain that my father and Brown mentioned my name more than once in their conversation."

In the midst of these cogitations, Charles was stopped short, by hearing Harvey call him; he started up in terror, thinking that his father was coming to be angry with him for having absented himself without leave. But this was not the case: Harvey had not at first perceived his absence, and the idea of his running away had never entered his mind; but he sought the child that he might speak to him, and represent the affair in which his services would be required in such a light as to secure his acquiescence; not that Harvey, in the slightest degree, cared for Charles's feelings, but he felt that in this instance violence would do no good, and that Charles's sense of right and wrong was so strong, that, when left to himself for a time, as he would be in this affair, he would refuse to act unless he

should be convinced that he was not acting improperly.

"Pray, father," cried Charles, as Harvey advanced towards him, "do not be angry; I felt unwell, and I came out into the air."

"I am not going to be angry," replied Harvey; "what is the matter with you?" and, thinking that it might enable him the better to work upon his little victim, he assumed somewhat of kindness in his manner, and asked him if there was anything he should like to take.

Charles answered, that he should be obliged for a glass of water; and Harvey went into the house and brought him one, which the boy thankfully drank.

"I feel better now," said Charles.

"Well, then," replied Harvey, "sit down on this bench again for a little while; make room for me beside you, and we will have a little talk together."

Charles willingly consented, well pleased with indications of kindness so unusual on the part of his father.

"Your mother," began Harvey, "seemed unwell, I think, this morning when we left her."

"Yes, indeed she was," replied Charles, "very unwell, and I have been thinking, many times today, who will get her dinner for her; she had no bread, and there will be no one to boil the cockles I picked up."

"That is poor food for a sick person," said Harvey;

"we must try and get her something better,—more nourishing; and we must have a doctor to attend her."

"Will you, indeed?" exclaimed Charles, joyfully, "but when? and when are we to return to her?—Shall we take the doctor and the nourishing food with us? and are we to go back soon? But," added he, in a sorrowful tone, observing that Harvey did not answer, "you have no money."

"You say truly," replied Harvey, "I have none; and without money it is impossible for me in any way to help your mother. Would you like to assist me in obtaining some money for her?"

Charles made no reply, for the recollection of the naval officer, of his little daughters, and of all the conversation he had that evening heard, rushed at once into his mind and kept him silent.

"Would you not like to help your mother?" demanded Harvey, in a somewhat reproachful tone.

"O, yes! gladly," answered Charles.

"And would you mind incurring some slight risk for her sake?"

"I would incur any risk," replied Charles, "in which I alone was to be the sufferer."

Harvey paused, at a loss how to proceed: he hesitated, and began a sentence once or twice, and then broke off; at last he said, "There is a gentleman, Charles—there is an officer that—that—what I mean to say is, that there is a man in this neigh-

bourhood has got a sum of money which ought to be mine, and I am resolved that he shall keep it from me no longer."

"You will employ the people, then, who see that justice is done in this country, to obtain it for you, I suppose."

"No, Charles, that will not do; no one but yourself can assist me."

"Not do!" repeated Charles, emboldened by the last part of Harvey's speech to speak freely; "my mother has told me that in no country are the laws so just and wise as in England; and surely you may find some one to see that you have justice done you, and that no one keeps the money from you which you ought to have."

Again was Harvey silenced; but, after a few moments' reflection, he said, "You are a sensible boy, Charles, now listen to what I am going to say;" and, laying his hand on the boy's shoulder in a friendly manner, and lowering his voice to a confidential tone, he continued, "I was going to observe, Charles, that is, I was going to tell you, that it will be better to get possession of this money quietly: are you willing to help me do so?"

"I should be sorry," replied Charles, firmly, "to do anything contrary to the laws of the country we live in."

"But if the laws will not help me, Charles, what am I to do then?"

"And will they not?" said Charles, with sur-

prise; "I have heard my mother say, and I have read myself, that in England every man, however poor, can have justice done him."

"Poh!" said Harvey, impatiently, "don't you believe, my man, what you read; books are all very well for idle people, who like to be entertained with a parcel of stories, but they are not fit for real life; they are of no use to men who are to live in the world."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Charles, losing, in the excitement of the moment, all his accustomed fear of Harvey, "indeed, you are quite mistaken; my mother has always taught me—"

"Silence!" cried Harvey, in an angry voice, quite forgetful at the moment of the plan of conciliation by which he had proposed bending Charles to his purpose; "do you dare contradict me, you little rascal?" then, suddenly checking himself, he added, in a softened manner, "well, well, you are a good boy, and meant no harm, I dare say, and you will be wiser as you grow older; but you must think that I know best; of course you do, and you must do as I bid you, and now I will tell you all about it. This naval officer who has got the money, my money, you know, has two children; now if I were to call in the aid of the law, this man would be taken and carried off to prison, and then what would become of his two daughters? they would be left without any one to take care of them, and their father, besides being shut up in confinement, would be very badly used; therefore, if I can contrive to

get what is my own by quiet means, how much better it will be for them all. Do you not think so?" added Harvey, on finding Charles made no answer; "much the best plan, is it not?"

"Yes," said Charles, if the money—really is your own, he would have said; but he stopped short, in dread of Harvey's displeasure.

"And then, when we have got the money," resumed Harvey, "we shall be able to provide a doctor for your mother, and proper food, and we can take her home a new dress?—does she want a dress, think you? Your own clothes, too, are very much worn; you must have a new suit."

"My clothes are very thin and old," replied Charles, "and we want much warmer clothing in this climate than we did in Florida; it is often very cold here. I wish my poor mother had a cloak to wrap herself up in when it rains, and when the wind blows."

"Well, you shall take her a cloak home, when we have got the money; but you must mind and be a good boy, and do exactly as you are bid, else we may miss the prize after all. Now let us go in and find Brown; he will wonder where we are, for the time is drawing near for us to set out."

Charles rose, and followed his father into the house; but his mind was far from being at ease. He was delighted with the advantageous prospect that the scheme held out respecting his mother, and he would have lent his aid to the utmost in the

furtherance of it, could he but have been satisfied the money really was Harvey's own. His father had certainly given a very good reason, and a kind one, for taking the money secretly; but how came the officer to have his father's money? he could not understand how that was, and he determined to ask Harvey to explain all the circumstances of the case fully to him. But Charles was mistaken in his idea that he could prevail upon Harvey to give him the explanation he sought; for though he made many attempts to gain his attention, his father peremptorily desired him to be silent, and not tease him with questions; and, when he and Brown set out, Charles was compelled to accompany them, without having any of his doubts resolved. All, therefore, that he could now do, was to hope the best; for neither could he resist his father, nor could he run away, as Harvey and Brown each held him by the hand as they walked along. The road they took was the same as Charles had passed in the evening, up the dark lane, along the lonely road into the village; and the boy's heart sank within him, when, stopping before the little villa where he had seen the two nice young ladies and the blind man, Brown said in a low voice to Harvey, "This is the house; but we had better go round to the back of it; we can manage the entrance better, and there is less chance of being seen should any one pass by." Accordingly, these two wicked men, dragging Charles with them, repaired to the other side and effected their entrance

into a small garden, that lay at the back of the house. Keeping Charles between them, they crept cautiously along the side of the garden-wall, and stopped at the end of it.

"Remain here a few moments," said Brown to Harvey, "while I go and reconnoitre."

So saying, he stepped forward to examine the windows and doors.

"It is as I suspected," whispered he on his return to his companions; "all is too strongly secured for us to enter in any other way but the one I spoke of; we must send the boy down one of the chimneys, and he must open the door to us from the inside. The chimney next us is the one for our purpose,—it belongs to a room that is not slept in; it is the drawing-room. Now is our time; it is past midnight, there are no lights burning, everything is quiet about the house, and no doubt the few persons within are fast asleep. And now, my little man," continued Brown, turning to Charles, "listen to your directions."

"O pray," exclaimed Charles, interrupting him, "pray do not think of doing such a wicked action; pray do not rob this good gentleman. Let us go, father,—I implore you, let us go."

"Hush! for heaven's sake, hush!" said Harvey, "we shall waken the inmates of the house." But Charles ceased not to entreat that they might go; and Harvey, feeling how hazardous was their situation, should Charles's exclamations lead to a dis-

covery, stifled the emotions of rage which were ready to burst forth at the child's daring to oppose him, and, taking hold of his hand, he turned away from the house, and led him to the bottom of the garden, as though he had determined to go back.

"Now, Charles," said he, "listen to me, do not speak loud, whatever you do; you see I am come away from the house to please you, that is, to hear what you have to say; now tell me what you mean by making all this disturbance, and objecting to do as you are bid?"

Charles then told his father the little history of the blind man and the two kind young ladies; and he ended by saying, that he was sure that such a good man as Captain Belgrave was, could never have got his money.

"Stuff and idle nonsense!" exclaimed Harvey, impatiently; "the fellow is a hypocrite, and gives away to poor people, to deceive, and that it may not be found out what sort of man he really is: this money, that I have told you of, is mine; he got it abroad. —But I tell you what, Charles; I did not come here to stand parleying with a little brat like you, who ought to know it is his duty to obey me, but to get possession of what is my own, and you shall do your part, or take the consequences of disobedience."

"Oh! father!" exclaimed Charles.

"Silence!" cried Harvey, placing his hand before the boy's mouth; "be silent, and hear me: you know how I have punished you when I have been angry;

now observe, you shall suffer double what you ever have done, if you do not immediately do what you are ordered; speak, will you do as I desire you?"

"I cannot, father; you may beat me if you please, but I will not rob that good gentleman."

"Then you do not care what becomes of your mother, you will not try to assist her," said Harvey, changing his angry voice into a tone of coaxing entreaty; "will you not help her?"

"My mother would not wish me to do what is wrong, I am sure," replied Charles, steadily.

"But I tell you it is not wrong; how can it be wrong to take away my own?"

"We lose time," said Brown, in a low voice, coming up behind them; "are you ready, young gentleman? we must set about the business directly; see, the moon, which was only just rising as we set out, is now getting high up, and we shall have too much light."

"I can do nothing with him," said Harvey, in a whisper aside to Brown, "he will not act."

"Threaten him with a good beating."

"I have," replied Harvey, "but the urchin is brave, and does not care for my threats."

"He is frightened, I imagine," said Brown; "he fears some mischance may happen to himself if he enters the house.

Harvey shook his head; "No, it is not that; I have had good experience that the boy is no coward."

"Let us try again, and persuade him," said Brown; "and I will tell him all he has to do." Accordingly, interspersed with frequent interruptions from Harvey, of threats of punishment to himself, and bribes of presents for his mother, Brown reiterated his instructions, which were, that he was to climb up, by the aid of the water-pipe and the fruit-tree that was nailed against the house, on to the parapet, and then, crawling up the slated roof, he was to ascend the chimney, and let himself down, through it, into the drawing-room; and, after listening carefully, to hear that there was no noise or signs of persons being up in the house, he was cautiously to descend the stairs, cross the hall, and unfasten the door that led into the garden.

"And now, my man," continued Brown, as he concluded his directions for the dozenth time, "you perfectly understand what you are going to be at; it is quite clear to you, that you are to gain your entrance into yonder house through the chimney, and you are to procure ours by letting us in through the door; and now for action." And, pushing Charles before him up to the house, he hoisted him on to his shoulder, and, bidding him hold tight by the branches of the tree and the water-pipe, the boy, sprang suddenly from him, and assisted by the frail support that he had been instructed to avail himself of, clambered up the side of the house with a dexterity that astonished Brown, and an alacrity that puzzled

Harvey, and, crawling with apparent ease over the roof, sprang to the top of the chimney, and, letting himself down, was out of sight in a moment.

"He was afraid of the beating," said Brown to himself; "He thinks of his mother," thought Harvey, as the two men stood wondering, and hardly able to credit the evidence of their senses, at such a sudden acquiescence on the part of Charles, and the perfect facility with which the most difficult part of their plot had been thus speedily accomplished.

"As active a little fellow as ever I saw in my life," at length ejaculated Brown, in an under-tone of voice; "a regular first-rate! He will suit us admirably, or else it really were a pity to take him on to land-service, he is so fitted for the sea. Quick as lightning, the young dog! he will be down, and round in a twinkling: but, in the mean time, let us move under the shadow of the wall, the moon-beams fall full upon us, as we stand here; come, Harvey, let us move into the shade."

And now, leaving the two confederates to beguile their impatience, under the shadow of the wall, as they best could, we will return to Charles, whom we left gliding down Captain Belgrave's chimney. But first it will be necessary to account for this sudden acquiescence in a plan, that a short time before, Charles had resolutely determined to have no share in.

Charles, although courageous, and possessing no small share of fortitude, had no more love for being

beaten than any other boy; and, while he stood, apparently listening to Brown's directions, and his father's exhortations, he was revolving in his mind if there was no middle course he could pursue; for, though steadily resolved that no fear of evil consequences to himself, or prospect of advantage to his mother, should induce him to do what he was aware she would consider, and he himself knew to be a very wicked action, still he felt that if, by any innocent stratagem, he could convey himself out of the power of Brown and his father, he would most gladly avail himself of it: the idea came into his mind, that if he was to get, as desired, into the chimney, he should effect his escape. At the same time, he had no thought of entering a house where he had no right to be; for he imagined that he should be able to support himself inside the upper part of the chimney till his father was tired of waiting for him, and would go away, and that he should then make his way back in the same manner that he had entered. But in this last part of his plan he found himself quite mistaken; for, though he held by his hands, and propped himself by his feet, against the brick-work, he found his strength gradually giving way, and he was obliged, however unwilling, to descend, in order to save himself from falling. He would have got out again on to the roof, but he was too much exhausted to be able to raise himself up; therefore, breaking his descent with his hands and feet, he glided gently down, and

rested on the abutment inside the chimney, just above the fire-place. Here, in perfect silence and obscurity, he stood to gain breath, and to consider what was now to be done. A few moments' reflection served to convince him that he had better remain quietly, for the present, where he was. He had made his escape from his father and Brown; and he thought himself perfectly free from any chance of discovery from the inhabitants of the house. As soon as he became convinced of the present safety of his position, the uneasiness of mind, and the fatigue of body, which he had undergone, so completely overpowered him, that, oppressed with a weight of sleep he was unable to control, he sank down into a sitting posture, and fell into profound repose. In this deep and refreshing slumber he continued three or four hours; and, when he awaked, he was alarmed to find, by the bright light that glanced across the top of the chimney, that it was broad day. He listened anxiously for any sounds that might inform him what time it was, when the clock of a neighbouring church struck five; he was happy to find it was no later; and, hoping to be able to make his escape before the family were up, he set about cautiously descending into the room. He turned himself quietly about in the chimney, so as to contrive to stoop his head forward, to look into the apartment, to discover if any one was there, when, finding all safe, he got down, and rested on the fender: here he paused, to take a sur-

vey of the room, and to brush the soot from his garments, that, if possible, he might not soil or in any way injure, what appeared to him, a place of very great beauty. Charles had been accustomed to the splendour and magnificence of nature, in all her glorious forms and colours, but to the elegance and refinements of art he was very much a stranger; and he now viewed, for the first time in his life, the elegant arrangement of an English drawing-room.

The apartment in which he stood, though by no means costly in its decorations, possessed that certain air, which told at once that those who inhabited it were persons of taste and refinement. It appeared as though the room had been hastily quitted the night before, for everything about seemed to indicate that the occupants had been called suddenly away; and Charles remembered that Captain Belgrave had been summoned to attend a dying relative. A harp stood uncovered; the piano-forte was left open, with music on the desk, and a flute and violin lying beside; on one of the tables, lay scattered, books, maps, and writing materials; and on another, the apparatus for water-colour drawing, with a sketch, just begun, standing on an easel. Bouquets of flowers, in vases of elegant shapes, perfumed the apartment; and the balconies were filled with geraniums, and graceful creeping plants, that climbed up the slight lattice that gently shaded, but did not obscure, the light of day. With the names of many of the articles in the room Charles was

acquainted, from having seen them represented in pictures; and it seemed like an unexpected meeting with old friends. But much as he admired every thing he saw, perhaps what interested him most was a pandean-pipe, suspended by a ribbon from the easel. This primitive instrument exactly resembled in form some pipes that, by his mother's assistance, he had constructed in Florida; and on which he was a tolerable proficient. Quite forgetting, for the moment, the risk he ran of being discovered, he stepped over the fender, and advanced to take a nearer survey of the object that so much excited his interest: he did not touch it; but a closer examination enabled him to ascertain that his own pipes were constructed in the same fashion. His attention was next attracted by the drawing that stood before him; it was a sketch of itinerant musicians: a boy, of his own age, was playing on the pandean-pipes; and a woman, with an infant in her arms, held out a tambourine, as though demanding charity. In this figure he imagined he discerned a striking likeness of his mother; he thought it had her mild and pensive look; and he could fancy that she was just going to speak to him. The remembrance of his mother recalled Charles to a recollection of where he was, and reminded him of the imprudence of loitering any longer on this spot, however delightful; and, resolutely turning away from other pictures, and from the books that lay temptingly about, he opened the room-door, crossed the vestibule, and began to

descend the stairs; he had not, however, taken many steps before the thought occurred to him, that, though this house had escaped the preceding night, it was liable to a fresh attack from some of the gang of robbers that frequented the "Jolly Tar," and he considered if it would not be possible to give the family warning. He paused for a few moments, to consider what he could do, when, returning back into the drawing-room, he looked about for writing materials, which he soon found, and, selecting a slip of paper, he wrote, in large legible characters, the following words: "Watch! for thieves want to enter and rob your house."

His next consideration was how to place the paper, so that it could not fail of attracting the notice of some member of the family. Casting his eyes on a table that stood in the middle of the room, he observed a small gold watch lying, together with some money, on a lady's silk work-bag, and though sorry to soil such delicate materials with his black fingers, he attached his paper to the ribbon of the watch by means of a needle and thread that lay beside the bag. Having satisfactorily accomplished his object, he again quitted the apartment and reached the hall-door without interruption; but here, a formidable impediment to his escape presented itself: the door was secured by two strong bolts, the upper one of which was beyond his reach. In vain he stood on tip-toe and stretched himself out to his utmost height, the points of the fingers of his

extended hand did not reach within an inch or two of the bolt. What could he do? He stood in perfect dismay, and the disappointment he experienced robbed him for a few moments of his usual presence of mind; but soon recovering himself, he looked round, to try and discover if there was any other way by which he could get out; when, in a dark corner at the further end of the hall, he observed a chair; he hastened towards it, and catching it up, brought it to the door, and mounting upon it, succeeded in drawing back the upper bolt without making any noise; then putting the chair on one side, he unfastened the bolt at the bottom, and carefully removing the chain, he gently turned the key which had been left in, and unfastened the lock; then raising the latch, he was on the very point of escaping unobserved, when the door of a room directly opposite suddenly opened, and a gentleman stood before him.

"What are you about; what are you doing here?" said the gentleman.

Charles was so much frightened, and so much confused at the awkward circumstances under which he appeared, that he could make no answer; and when the gentleman, in a firm but mild tone of voice, again demanded, "How came you here?" he could only stammer out, "I came down the chimney."

"And by what right did you enter this house,"

continued his inquirer, "and for what porpose did you come? look up and answer me."

Charles raised his eyes to the speaker's face, and felt reassured, for the expression of surprise and displeasure, with which the gentleman had at first regarded him, had passed away, and his countenance had resumed its accustomed expression of goodness and benevolence.

"I will tell you, sir," said Charles, "I will tell you all about it;" and he proceeded to inform Captain Belgrave, for it was he to whom he was speaking, of all that had occurred since he left L——. At the conclusion of his narration, Captain Belgrave shook his head, "I fear, my boy, that you are not telling me the truth: it is most probable that you attempted to let the robbers in, and could not succeed."

"Indeed, sir," cried Charles, "all I have told you is perfectly true."

"I fear I cannot believe you," said Captain Belgrave, doubtingly; "I cannot understand how the father can be a rogue, and yet have brought up his son to be virtuous."

"O! sir," said Charles, with energy, "my mother teaches me to be good; I have lived with her much more than with my father; and if she could have prevented it, I should not have been brought away from her at this time. Do, sir, pray believe me, and pray let me now return to my mother."

"I cannot let you go," replied Captain Belgrave.

"Then you won't believe me, and you will keep me here!" exclaimed Charles, in a tone of great distress.

"My good boy," replied Captain Belgrave, "I am not a young man, and I have had a great deal of experience in the world; and I tell you candidly, that I must have better proof than your own words, before I can believe your romantic tale."

"What can I do," cried Charles; "what proof can I give!" then pausing for a few moments, he said, "you can send for my mother, and she will tell you, that I should never think of doing such a wicked action as to rob any one; and I am sure I would not on any account have injured you, nor these young ladies," continued he, turning to Captain Belgrave's daughters, who had followed their father into the hall when he first discovered Charles. "That is the young lady," continued he, looking at Rose, the eldest girl, "that spoke so kindly to the blind man—perhaps she recollects me."

"I cannot, indeed," answered Rose, "your face is so black; but if you would wash it, I could tell if you are the same boy that stood at our gate when blind John was there, for I remarked him. He looked so pale and tired, that I was going to have given him a cake I had in my basket, if he had not suddenly ran away."

The means of removing the soot from his face and hands were afforded Charles, and Rose pronounced

him to be the boy on whom she had intended to bestow her bounty.

"So far, then, your history is true," said Captain Belgrave, "but that is not enough; you have been found in this house under most suspicious circumstances, and I must detain you."

"Indeed, indeed, sir, I am perfectly innocent; do, pray let me go! I never thought of doing you any injury. I wished to save you from harm—stay," exclaimed he, his countenance suddenly brightening, and his voice changing to a tone of joyfulness, "I wrote a paper to give you warning against the thieves, and left it on the table up stairs, in the room where the chimney is, which I came down; that will prove the truth of what I tell you."

"I will run and see," said Rose, "if the paper is there; what he says must be true."

"Yes, do," said Emma, her sister; "let us run and look; I hope it is there:" and with the alacrity of well-disposed children, who are always desirous in a case like this, that the suspected person should turn out good instead of bad, they hastened up stairs to find the paper containing the warning.

In the mean time Captain Belgrave was left alone with Charles, and though he could not be said to entertain the same sanguine wishes as his children, still there was something in the open intelligent countenance of the boy, and in his air and manner, that interested him, and made him wish that he might be as innocent as he looked.

"His story is true!" cried Rose, quickly returning, and running up with the watch in her hand, with the paper attached to it, on which Charles had written the warning.

"You see here it is; read, papa; and look, here are the black finger-marks he made when he fastened the paper to the watch-ribbon."

"He is honest too," said Emma, quickly following her sister, and holding money in her hand towards her father; "see, papa, here is the money, four sovereigns and fifteen shillings, that you gave Rose to pay the baker's bill with."

"Do you not believe him now, papa?" said Rose, observing that her father had not yet spoken; "do you not believe that he is innocent?"

"Yes," said Captain Belgrave, "I do believe him, and I beg his pardon for having so long doubted his truth; shake hands with me my little fellow," continued the captain; "forgive my suspicions, and receive my sincere thanks for the intrepidity and cleverness you have shown in this affair. Now, let me offer you some refreshment, come with me into my study; and Rose, my dear, let him have some breakfast."

Charles followed Captain Belgrave into his study, and the servant quickly bringing him a basin of warm milk, and some bread and meat, the little boy ate with a good appetite.

"It shall be my business to reward you handsomely," said Captain Belgrave, "for conduct to

which I am so much indebted: but in the mean time you must accompany me to a magistrate, where you must make a deposition of the circumstances you have related respecting the gang at the 'Jolly Tar.' Several robberies have been committed in this neighbourhood lately, and we must seize upon the men that assemble there; your father and his accomplice will, no doubt, be lurking about somewhere near at hand, waiting for you, and I must take steps in order to have them apprehended. It is a most fortunate circumstance that I had not left home; I had received an express, begging me to attend upon my sister, who was supposed to be in a dying state, and I was on the point of setting out, when a friend who had just left her, called on me last night, and said there was no immediate danger, and that I had better wait till the following morning, when I could take my girls with me to see their aunt. Accordingly I delayed my journey, and we had risen early with the intention of setting off in the cool of the morning, when I discovered you on the point of going out at the hall-door. Now, eat the remainder of your breakfast, while I go and finish dressing; I will be back to you in a few minutes." So saying, he quitted the room, and Charles was left alone; but the boy did not finish his breakfast, for Captain Belgrave's communication deprived him of all inclination to eat, and filled his mind with a full sense of the disagreeable situation in which he was placed. He was required to come forward as a witness

against his father, for such he considered Harvey to be; and in order to do justice to Captain Belgrave, and the public at large, it was necessary that the son should prove the guilt of the father. Such was the conclusion to which Charles's reflections brought him; for though his train of reasoning was carried on in the manner of a child, he arrived at last at the truth.

"I cannot do it," said he to himself, after having stood for a few minutes in deep meditation; "I cannot be the means of bringing my father to shame and punishment; and besides, it might draw trouble upon my mother, were I to do so. I must run off then, before Captain Belgrave misses me, or I shall be compelled to appear before the magistrate." Having thus said, he looked round to see which would be the best way of putting his plan into execution, when it occurred to him that the quickest and readiest method would be to jump out of the window; accordingly he threw up the sash, and climbing on to the window-sill, he sprang over the area without touching the railing that surrounded it, and alighted safe in the garden, where he had entered the night before with Harvey and Brown. Without loss of time he hastened down the walk, and getting through the gap in the fence the men had made the preceding night, he took the road that led to the "Jolly Tar," and did not lacken his pace till he arrived at the entrance of the green-lane. Here he paused to reflect upon the singular events

of the last few hours, and to consider what sort of reception he was likely to encounter from his father. He feared that he would be exceedingly angry with him, when he came to know what had caused the failure of his scheme; still he felt it was not in his power to disguise any part of the truth, and he had arrived at the public-house before he could arrange in what manner to tell his tale, so as best to mitigate his father's wrath. With trembling hand and beating heart, Charles knocked at the door, but no one answered the summons; he knocked again, still no one appeared; and looking over the house, he observed the shutters of the lower rooms were not yet open, and the curtains of the bed-rooms were still undrawn, and he judged that no one was at present up; but as he was anxious to give his father immediate warning of the danger that threatened him, he continued to knock till the landlord, opening an upper window, put out his head, and angrily demanded what he wanted.

"I wish," said Charles, "to speak to my father directly: pray let me in."

"I know nothing about your father," replied the landlord.

"He supped here last night," said Charles; "I was with him, but I have been away since then, and I must now see him directly; pray, sir, let me see my father."

"I know nothing about your father, I tell you again," replied the landlord; "I know nothing

about him—get along with you, you little troublesome brat, and do not come here disturbing people at this untimely hour of the morning. So saying, he was about to retreat from the window, when Charles called out earnestly, "Pray, sir, tell my father that he is in danger; that men are about who want to take him up for a thief."

The sound of the words, danger and thief, seemed to move the selfish feelings of the landlord, who, conscious that neither his own character nor that of his guests would bear strict investigation, thought it better to take the trouble of coming down stairs to learn the exact nature of Charles's business; therefore, bidding the boy wait a few minutes, he hastily dressed himself, and came and spoke to him. No sooner had he heard the boy's tale, and that his house was threatened with a visit from the police, than he set about in such good earnest, clearing it of all its suspicious inmates, that in less than five minutes Charles had the opportunity of observing that his father was not among them.

"There!" exclaimed the landlord, as the last of his dirty disorderly guests moved off; "the magistrate himself may come now, if he will; no one remains but old blind Peggy, deaf Tom, and a cripple who has been known about the neighbourhood these twenty years."

"I perceive, sir," said Charles, "that my father is not here; pray when do you think he will be back?"

To this question the landlord was about to return an abrupt answer, when recollecting that he owed Charles something for the information that he had just received, he replied: "Why, my lad, as to your father's returning here or not, I can give no answer, being as how, you see, I do not know him, nor what his plans are; but this I can say, that gentlemen of your father's profession do not show themselves much about by daylight, and that if he means to come and look for you here, it will most likely not be till night. In the mean time you may go birds'-nesting in yonder fields, taking care to keep out of sight—and here's a slice of bread and cheese for you: now take it and be off, there's a man, for I don't want you to be found loitering about here."

Charles, who felt equally anxious to escape observation, took the provisions that were offered him, and hastening into the fields, concealed himself till night, when he again presented himself at the "Jolly Tar," in search of his father; but Harvey was not there, nor any one of the men with whom he had been associating the preceding evening. Charles addressed himself to the landlord, who told him that no one had been there inquiring, and that the well-being of his house would not allow of his receiving as guests, any persons of his father's order, till after this affair of the attack upon Captain Belgrave's house had blown over; so that if he came he could not remain; but he told Charles, that if he liked to go and lie down in a lumber-closet, and keep himself

quiet, he might pass the night there; but that if he did so, he must be up and away by daylight the next morning; "and," added he, "I shall call you up myself, for I am going early to town to-morrow."

Charles felt glad to pass the night under shelter, and accepting this offer, retired to the closet, where the landlord locked him in.

Charles had meditated, when he was in the fields, upon what step he had better take, in case he did not find his father; and he came to the determination, should that prove to be the case, to return to London, and finding his way down to the river, trust to chance to get back to his mother: therefore, when the landlord came to call him in the morning, he asked permission to walk along with him, as he feared he should otherwise lose himself.

"I am not going to walk at all, my man; I am going to town in my light cart, to bring back some casks to replenish the cellar of the 'Jolly Tar;' but I don't care if I give you a lift; so jump in, for here comes the cart, and I want to be off."

Chapter IX.

The business which took the landlord of the "Jolly Tar" to London, occasioned him to go within a short distance of the custom-house, so that when Charles was set down, he easily found his way to the river; and it so happened, that he directed his steps to the very place where steam-boats to all parts of the country were hourly starting. He anxiously looked out for one bound to the spot where he wished to go; and after waiting some time, he observed the S—— boat preparing to set off. With joy he hastened to the place of embarkation, when suddenly recollecting that he had no money, he stopped short, and with feelings of bitter disappointment stood looking on at the passengers that were hurrying on board.

"Stand out of the way, child, can't you?" said a rough surly-looking man, who brushed by him as he was hastening to embark, loaded with a carpet-bag, cloak, and umbrella.

"Come on, come on," cried he, angrily, to a little fat old woman, who came panting along behind; "don't you see the boat is just off?"

"I can't come any faster, Will, I am so loaded."

"Let me help you to carry your box," said Charles, good-naturedly running forward and taking it from her, together with a large brown-paper parcel.

"Thank you, my dear," said she; "you may just bring them to the boat for me, if you please."

"Come along," said the husband, as they arrived, and snatching the box and parcel from Charles's hand, he hurried his wife so impatiently into the boat, that her shawl fell off. Charles picked it up, and handed it to her; at that moment the corners of a handkerchief that had been hastily tied together, gave way, and a present of nuts and oranges, which the old lady had prepared for her grand-children, rolled down, and strewed the deck.

"Mr. White, you do flurry me so!" said she, in a plaintive tone of voice; "there's an end of poor Bob and Susy's present;" and her eyes filling with tears, she took a seat on the corner of a bench, and began fanning herself with her pocket-handkerchief.

"Never mind," said Charles, kindly addressing her, "I will have them all up again in a minute; lend me the handkerchief to put them in;" and stooping down on his hands and knees, he applied himself diligently to collect the fallen treasures; but it proved a much more tedious business than he had imagined; for though he readily regained the oranges, the nuts had rolled to remote parts of the vessel, and had got intermixed among the luggage that was piled round the chimney, so that he had much difficulty in recovering them; but patiently persevering, he at last brought them to Mrs. White, with but few of the original quantity diminished.

In the mean time, the steam-boat had been going

on, and Charles unexpectedly found himself some miles from London, on his way to S——. He would on no account have committed a fraud on the master of the vessel, by endeavouring to obtain a passage for which he had not the means of paying; but never having been on board a steamer before, the motion had been so gentle and uniform, and his attention having been occupied, he was not aware that the vessel had started. As it was, he could not but rejoice at a circumstance so favourable to his wishes; and he hoped, that when he came to explain to the captain by what means he had become his passenger, his involuntary intrusion would be pardoned. His mind being thus set at rest, he amused himself with observing the face of the country on the opposite shores, and in remarking the different passengers; but his attention was particularly directed to the wonderful machine that, unaided by either wind or sails, was cutting its way through the waters with a rapidity that he had seldom seen equalled even in the fastest sailing ships. The thing appeared to the young sailor little less than magic; and he felt very thankful to a good-natured passenger, who, amused with his astonishment, took the trouble of giving so clear and simple an explanation of the manner in which steam-vessels are worked, that he was enabled perfectly to comprehend the nature of them; and though his wonder was lessened, his admiration of the ingenuity of the contrivance was increased.

After some time had elapsed, and he thought Mrs. White would be recovered from the fatigue and agitation of her arrival on board, he looked about for her in order to offer her any little attention that might be in his power; and seeing her sitting in the same place where he had left her, he went to her, and was just going to speak, when her husband, who had recovered his good-humour from meeting with some old acquaintance in the packet, came up, and said that he was going down into the cabin to eat and drink with his friends, and asked her to join the party. She spoke to him and thanked him, as though she had no recollection of his late disobliging behaviour, but she declined taking any refreshment.

"Come, come, don't be sulky, wife," said he; "here, take this, take this, to buy the children some more oranges," and pulling half-a-crown out of his waistcoat pocket, he threw it into her lap. Mrs. White assured her husband that she was not at all sulky, but that she had no appetite; and as her head ached, she had rather remain on deck where the fresh air was reviving. And though it was very evident, from the poor soul's flushed countenance, that she was ill at ease, White, alike boisterous in his kindness as in his displeasure, still persisted, and declaring that a glass of ale would set her all right, and that he would not go without her, forced her to accompany him into the cabin. Charles had been an attentive observer of this scene, and though a child, he made the reflection, that as it appeared that this man's nature was not

really bad, it was a pity that in moments of irritation, he did not practise more self-command; and that if he would but exercise a little timely forbearance, he would save much pain to others, and win the love that he liked to possess. Mrs. White did not remain long below in the cabin; and on her return upon deck, she brought Charles some of the viands of which she herself had been solicited to partake. Charles gratefully accepted the refreshment, which was very welcome, as he had not before eaten any thing that morning.

In process of time, the man appeared with his book, whose business it was to go round and collect the fares of the passengers. He presented Charles with a ticket, and demanded his money, upon which the boy begged to be allowed to speak a few words to the master of the vessel; and Captain X—— being pointed out to him, Charles claimed his attention while he narrated the circumstances through which he came to be on board his vessel. The captain listened with kindness to the child's tale; and having ascertained from Mrs. White, that what he told him was true, he not only pardoned his intrusion, but gave orders that when the boat conveyed away the passengers who were bound for L——, Charles should be put down there free of expense. Accordingly, about an hour and a half before sunset, Charles found himself with a shilling in his pocket, the gift of Mrs. White, landed on the beach just off the custom-house. With eager haste he ran

along the shore in the direction of the tent that had formed his home, and where he trusted to find his mother. But on his arrival at the spot where their little encampment had been made, great were his astonishment and sorrow, to perceive that neither his mother nor the tent were there. In dismay he looked around, and called on his mother's name; he searched about among the neighbouring cliffs, and wandered over the fields seeking for her, but no where was she to be found. He continued his unwearying pursuit till long after the night had closed in; he tried to learn tidings of her from every one whom he met; he went to the custom-house, to see if he could find any of his father's companions, and inquired at many of the poorer habitations in the town, but all without success: no one could throw any light upon the subject of his distress. After visiting the town, he returned again to the spot where the tent had been pitched, thinking it possible he might have mistaken the place, but he found that he had been quite right; and if it had been possible to doubt, there was a cliff close at hand, in a crevice of which lay, where he was accustomed to deposit it, a rude kind of apparatus, which he had constructed for the purpose of catching shrimps. Wholly disheartened, and experiencing a grief which he had never before felt, he paced up and down the lonely shore, lighted by a waning moon, and listening to the roaring waves of an ebbing tide, till quite exhausted with fatigue and sorrow, he crept under the

shelter of an overhanging cliff. Here, in a troubled sleep, he passed the hours till morning, when hunger compelled him to go in quest of something to eat, and obliged him to spend part of the money which he had hoped to have given his mother. All this day, and many succeeding ones, he passed in endeavouring to ascertain what had become of his beloved parent; but his efforts were fruitless, and at last the dreadful thought took possession of his mind, that she was drowned. His imagination presented him with the frightful picture of his mother lying faint and ill in the tent, without the power to move, and a higher tide than usual having arisen, she, with the tent, had been washed into the river. Overcome with this terrible idea, he threw himself on the beach, and wept aloud.

"What ails ye, lad?" said an old fisherman, who was going out early to his occupation; "what makes ye lie here crying, as if your heart would break?" At the sound of a voice near him, Charles started up; and upon the fisherman again demanding what he cried for, he replied, "I have lost my mother; the high tides have drowned her."

"High tides!" repeated the fisherman; "what high tides? I know of none lately; the boy's mad, surely."

"Oh no! I am not," cried Charles; and somewhat tranquillized by the man's observation about the tides, he proceeded, in as few words as possible, to make his questioner understand the nature of his grief.

"Your mother is gone, 'tis true," said the old man, when Charles had concluded his piteous tale; "but if your tent stood where you say it did, there has been no tide the last month past, that would have reached it."

Deriving some consolation from this assurance, Charles asked the fisherman, what he thought could have become of his mother, and what step he had better take towards finding her; adding, at the same time, that he had diligently searched about the neighbourhood, and made every possible inquiry.

"Why, if that be the case," replied the old man, "I think the best thing you can do, is to get back to London, and seek for your father at the inn where you say you first landed. If you do not meet with him, perhaps you will see some of his companions, who will tell you where he is; and you may thus be able to learn tidings of your mother."

Charles thanked the fisherman for his advice, which he determined to follow, and hastening on to S——, he arrived just in time to see the good-natured captain of the packet before he set out, and to beg him to have the kindness to take him back to London. The captain granted his request; and, early in the evening, Charles found himself once again landed amidst the throng and bustle of London. He immediately set out in search of the inn, where, a short time before, he had gone with his father. But, either he had not disembarksd at the same wharf, or he had mistaken the locality of the place,

for he could no where find the public-house of which he was in search. He wandered up and down the streets, through dark lanes and dirty alleys, in the neighbourhood of the Thames, till he was quite bewildered; and at last, night coming on, he abandoned all further search till the morning; and creeping cautiously along a timber-yard, he contrived to conceal himself from observation under a pile of wood, and wrapping around him an old sack that happened to lie at hand, he laid himself along on the ground, and passed several hours in shelter and security. In the morning he renewed his search, but with no better success than the night before; till, at last, wholly dispirited, and faint for want of food, he presented himself at the door of an eating-house, and petitioned the master to give him a job of work to do, that he might earn a meal, to save himself from starving.

Fortunately for Charles, he made his application at a time when there were no customers in the shop, and though the master had no employment for him, he was at leisure to attend to Charles's petition; and struck with his gentle manner and the plaintive tone of his voice, so different from the generality of beggars, he compassionately gave him some bread and meat, and told him he might sit down in his shop, and rest, while he ate the refreshment. Revived by this timely succour, Charles, with renewed strength and spirits, set off again on his search; and, thinking that it was no use wandering up and down

in that neighbourhood any longer, he resolved to go in an entirely different direction. He had just come to this determination, when a cabriolet drove past, in which were two men, one of whom he thought, in the momentary glimpse he caught, was Brown, his father's associate. He called to the driver to stop; but his feeble voice was drowned amidst the rattle of carriages, and the din and noise of the streets. Charles sprung after the carriage, and would have caught hold of the horse, but the street was so crowded with coaches and conveyances of all descriptions, that it was impossible to come up with it; and all he could do was to keep it in sight, by running along the pavement. The driver kept on at a quick pace, crossing over, and turning down, a number of streets; so that Charles, although an expert runner, had considerable difficulty in keeping him in view. At length, just as Charles's strength and breath were beginning to fail, and he was about to abandon the pursuit as hopeless, the driver slackened his pace, and drew up at the corner of a shabby-looking street. Here the men jumped out, and dismissing their conveyance, stood for a few moments, apparently in consultation, and afforded Charles the opportunity of ascertaining that one of them actually was Brown. Delighted at this fortunate chance, Charles hastened up to him, and laying his hand on his arm, to gain his attention, eagerly demanded if he knew where his father was? Brown started at

the suddenness of the address, and stared at Charles for some moments without recognising him.

"Do you not recollect me?" said Charles. "I went with you and my father to Captain Belgrave's house, the night you meant to rob ——"

"Hush, hush!" said Brown, interrupting him; "don't speak so loud;—doors and windows have ears. I recollect you now,—a pretty trick you served us! I ought not to forget you in a hurry."

"But where is my father?" demanded Charles, in his turn interrupting Brown.

"I can't stand talking here," replied the man; "but come with me, and I will tell you."

Charles drew back, for he did not feel willing to trust himself with these men; besides, the night was fast approaching; he therefore said, "I only wish to know where my father is."

"You need not fear," replied Brown, "he will do you no harm;" and walking forward a few paces, he turned sharp round, and proceeded some little way down a dark, dirty-looking court. Charles followed, as he had not yet obtained the information he was bent upon gaining.

"Come here," said Brown, stopping short, and laying hold of Charles's arm; "you wish to learn tidings of your father; I will tell you about him, but you must come with me, I have something you must do for me;—but as you are a mischievous young dog, and as cunning as a fox, you shall not

see where you are going, for you may think fit to betray my hiding-place, and it is not my wish that my abode should be known." So saying, he suddenly enveloped Charles in the folds of the large boat-cloak he wore, and clapping his hand over his mouth, drew him on. Charles was prevented from screaming out, but he struggled to free himself from the powerful grasp in which he was held.

"Be quiet," said Brown, in a low voice, "no harm shall come to you."

But as Charles continued his efforts to release himself, Brown stopped for a moment, and removing his hand from the child's mouth, said, "Be silent, and hear me; you are quite safe, your father will never hurt you again;—he is dead."

"Dead!" repeated Charles; and the shock that he sustained from the abruptness of the news, and the variety of feelings that it gave rise to, and the conjectures as to how the event might affect his mother, so completely absorbed his thoughts, that he suffered Brown to lead him on unresistingly and blindfolded.

"You must mind how you go," said Brown to Charles, as, after a circuitous route, he entered a house, at which he had knocked; "there are steps to go down;—there, you are at the bottom now; go in here, and I will come to you presently." So saying, Brown unfolded the cloak from around Charles, and pushing him into a room, and bidding him keep quiet, he shut the door, and bolted it on the outside.

The apartment into which Charles was thus unceremoniously ushered, was perfectly dark, so that he could not at all make out where he was; but it felt damp and cold; and, notwithstanding Brown's assurances that no harm was intended him, he began, at the end of a quarter of an hour that he had been left alone, to feel very uneasy; and, unheeding Brown's injunction to be quiet, he applied himself, with all his strength, to assail the door with knocks and kicks, and to call out loudly for help. This exertion tended a little to allay the excitement of his feelings; and after pausing a moment, to gain breath, he was about to renew his knocks and cries, when Brown withdrew the bolts, and opening the door, entered the room, with a light in his hand.

"What!" said he, "so you could not keep quiet, while I went to find what I have to tell you about; —well, I suppose you were frightened; but, as I told you before, no one is going to wrong you. Here, sit down and listen to what I am going to tell you." So saying, he placed the light on an old broken table, and pushing a three-legged stool towards Charles, he himself occupied the only chair in the place. Charles looked round, and felt somewhat reassured, when he found that instead of the dungeon his imagination had conjured up when by himself in the dark, the room he was in appeared to be a back kitchen, certainly without any appearance of neatness or comfort, but still a place that was in use by the inhabitants of the house.

"Here is what I have to tell you about," said Brown, as he drew a small parcel from his pocket, and laid it on the table; "but before I begin, my young rogue, be pleased to tell me what became of you that first and last night that I had the honour of being associated with you in a plot. I say, speak! What made you keep your father and me waiting in that precious manner under the wall, after we sent you down the chimney at the old captain's?"

"You will be angry," said Charles, "if I tell you; besides, it is of no consequence now."

"I shall not be angry," replied Brown; "but if you do not choose to tell me, neither shall I inform you about your father."

"Well, then," said Charles, "if it must be so, I will tell you; it was because I did not choose to join in the robbery, and I waited in the chimney till I thought you would be tired and go away."

"I thought as much," exclaimed Brown; "your father was very angry, and declared he would be revenged upon you; but, for my part, though not over pleased to be tricked by such a youngster, I could not forbear smiling to think how you had outwitted us, and I gave you credit for your ingenuity. How did you come off yourself? Did you get away undiscovered? and was it you who laid an information against the gentlemen at the 'Jolly Tar?'"

In answer to these queries, Charles told Brown of his unwillingness to be a witness against his father; and of his running away from Captain Belgrave's,

and of all that had passed between himself and the landlord of the "Jolly Tar."

"And now you shall hear what I have to tell," said Brown, as Charles concluded his narrative.

"After we gave up all idea that you would open the door to us, at Captain Belgrave's, we agreed to return to the inn from whence we came, and drown our vexation in grog; but as we were proceeding along, it struck me that you would tell all, and that a hue and cry would be raised after us, and that we had better hide our heads in London till the affair had blown over, or till we had heard what you had done. We, therefore, turned about and walked briskly on towards this haven of thieves, the metropolis. We had not proceeded very far, when the day began to break, and, just as we had ascended a long hill, your father declared that he could discern by the light, imperfect as it was, two policemen running after us. We took to our heels, and, turning a corner of the road, lost sight of our pursuers. 'Let us hide in that plantation,' said Harvey, as we came up to a clump of firs, that bordered a gentleman's grounds by the way-side; and, dashing in among the trees, he sprang up one of the tallest, and in a few moments was completely screened from view. I followed his example, and, from our hiding-place, we had the satisfaction of seeing the men pass who had occasioned us such an alarm, and who proved to be two soldiers, returning home after a day's leave of absence from their regiment. 'Thank

heaven, we are safe this time!' exclaimed your father, as the men passed by. 'It would have been a pity,' said I, 'to have been interrupted in the beginning of your new career.'

"'Yes,' replied he, 'and, now I am in for it, I care not how far I go; come, let us make haste down; I am impatient to do something to make up for the foolish affair of last night, and as to that boy—' What your father would have added I do not know, for, as he uttered these last words, he stepped incautiously on to a decayed branch, which, breaking from under him, he fell with tremendous force to the ground. I hastened to his aid, and, calling aloud for help, the soldiers, who were within hearing, returned. 'I am killed!' said your father, in a faint voice. 'I hope not,' said I; 'can you not stand? let us raise you up.'

"'I cannot stand,' replied he; 'I am mortally hurt.' It was true enough,—he could not stand,—his back was broken; and, taking him gently up, the two men and I carried him into a cottage, that stood on the opposite side of the road. The occupant of the cottage was an old woman, who had not the ability, even if she had the inclination, to resist the entrance of three powerful men; so we laid the sufferer on her bed, which stood below. The soldiers then said they were obliged to go, but that they would send medical assistance immediately that it could be met with.

"'It is of no use,' said Harvey; 'I am going

fast; but I hope to be able to say a few words before I die. Brown,' continued he, 'I have a request to make of you.'—Here he closed his eyes, and remained in apparent unconsciousness so long, that I should have thought he was dead, if it had not been for the working about his mouth. At last, he heavily raised his eyes, and pronounced my name. I asked him if he was in pain. 'Yes,' he said, 'but that is not the thing;—my wife, my poor wife!—I cannot speak of her. I have been a bad husband to the best creature that ever breathed. I now can make her no amends; but there is one act of justice I can do, and you, Brown, must lend me your assistance. Feel,' continued he, 'in the breast-pocket of my coat; you will find a packet,—take it out, and look at what it contains.'

"I did as he desired, and saw a miniature picture of a lady, set in gold and jewels. 'I purloined that,' said he, 'from my wife the morning we left L——. I found out where she kept it concealed, and took it away without her knowledge, to sell for the value of the setting. I had often desired her to let me have it, to dispose of; but she always refused, as she valued it above all price: it belonged to —' here the violence of the pain he was enduring compelled him to stop, and when he spoke again, it was with difficulty that I could at first make out what he said; but presently rousing himself, with an energy that was truly astonishing in a dying man, he took hold of my hand, and, pressing it firmly,

said, 'Brown, find out my wife, wherever she may be, find her out, and restore that picture to her;—do not refuse my request; as you would hope for a tranquil death-bed yourself, do not deny me. As you would wish for mercy yourself, do not refuse to comply with the urgent request of a dying man.'

"'I will do as you desire,' said I; 'tranquillize yourself, and it shall be as you wish;' when, observing that I was looking attentively at the rich casing of the picture, he appeared uneasy; I added, 'Do not be afraid, I will do as you have asked me. You have no reason to think me over scrupulous about other people's property; but, bad as I am, there is one thing that I must ever hold sacred, and that is, the petition of a dying person.' Upon this assurance he became more calm, and, in a few moments, added, 'Tell her, I ask her forgiveness for all the wrongs that I have done her,—for all my unkindness—may God forgive—' Here he was again interrupted by a violent paroxysm of pain, from which he never sufficiently recovered to speak intelligibly; and, soon after, death put an end to his sufferings."

"Did my poor father mention me?" said Charles, as he wiped away the tears that this melancholy recital had caused; "I never pleased him at any time, and I fear he was very angry with me for not letting him into Captain Belgrave's house."

"I cannot exactly say," replied Brown; "in one or two of his ejaculations, which I could not quite

understand, he appeared to me to say, 'Poor boy —poor child!' but I cannot positively tell."

"I wish he might," said Charles; "he was my father, and I tried to love him and be as dutiful to him as I could."

"Yes, yes, I dare say you did; all very right, that," said Brown, impatiently, for he was beginning to tire of the subject, now that he had acquitted himself of the task imposed upon him, by giving the son the miniature to restore to his mother. "All quite right, but you and I must now part: here, take this picture and give it to your mother; put it in that pocket inside your jacket,—there, that's right, push it down tight; there, that's quite safe. Now, I must go, and so must you."

"But, sir," said Charles, eagerly, "I have not yet told you that I cannot find my —"

At that moment some one tapped at the door, and Brown having called out "Come in," a man entered, who, though closely muffled up in a cloak, and his hat slouched over his eyes, Charles recognised to be Brown's companion in the cabriolet.

"We are quite ready, and only wait for you," said he, addressing Brown.

"I will join you instantly," replied Brown; and, jumping up, he whispered a few words in the other man's ear, and hastened out of the room.

"You must come along with me," said the man in the cloak, to Charles; "follow me up stairs."

Charles did as he was bid, not sorry to quit the dismal place where he was; but when he found that he was again to be blindfolded, and taken into the streets, he resisted with all his might, and declared that he would not leave the house without first seeing Brown.

"Brown is coming after us," said the man; "be quiet and come along with me, and you will see him;" and Charles, however unwilling to be forced away, had no option; for the man, tying a handkerchief tightly round his eyes, forced him outside the house, and hurried him along the streets for the space of five minutes or more, when, suddenly letting go his grasp of the boy's arm, he turned off, and, before Charles had time to uncover his eyes and look after him, he had vanished from view. Charles stood for some time quite at a loss what to do; it was night, he was an utter stranger in the place where he was, he was tired and hungry, and without money to procure food and lodging.

"What shall I do,—what will become of me?" exclaimed he; "it is very evident Brown never means to come to me, and without his help, or the help of some one else, I shall never find my poor mother; and where can I pass the night? no one will take me in without paying. I must lie down and die in the streets:" so saying, he burst into tears, and, sitting down on the step of a door, he gave way unrestrainedly to his grief. At length he began to consider that crying would do no good,

and he remembered his mother's words, that, however bad our situation may be, we may make it better or worse, by the patience or otherwise with which we bear our lot; and that we should always consider whether it is not in our power to render our situation more bearable by our own exertions. "But what can I do in this case?" thought he; "if I could work, no one in London would employ a boy they know nothing of: I have been told so several times already; but if I could find somewhere to pass the night, I would try and get back again into the country, and search about once more to find my dear mother." He arose from the steps where he had been sitting, and walked on, and as he paced to and fro in the streets, meditating upon what he should do, it came into his mind that he had better part with some of his clothing, to obtain the means of procuring food and shelter; but the coldness of the climate, compared with the warm country to which he had been accustomed, made him very loth to give up any of his covering. At length he determined upon parting with his stockings, as being articles the use of which he thought he could best dispense with; and, kneeling down by the side of a lamp, he took off one of his shoes; but, to his great discomfort, he discovered that his stockings were worn almost off his feet by continual walking. He sighed as he rose up, and thought to himself that no one would give him even a crust of bread in exchange such old worn-out things. As he stood ponder-

ing upon his unpleasant situation, he thought of the handkerchief with which he had been bandaged, and which he had mechanically put in his pocket when he removed it from his eyes. He drew it forth, and observed that it was a good substantial silk handkerchief. "This," said he to himself, "is worth something;" but then the thought crossed his mind, that it was not his own: a little reflection, however, served to convince him that it would be over-scrupulous not to turn it to any purpose that could be useful to himself. He walked on, to look about for the best place to dispose of it; but he had not gone far before his attention was attracted by an oyster-shop, where a man and woman were waiting upon customers. Hunger made the oysters appear particularly delicious, and he remained for some time watching the persons as they stood eating. At last, his eager eyes and hungry aspect drew upon him the notice of a fat good-natured looking man, who, if Charles was not wrong in his reckoning, had swallowed at least four dozen. He called to Charles to come forward, and bade the man open him a few, and give him a piece of bread. The hungry boy eagerly devoured the welcome repast, and, thanking his friend, said, "If it had not been for your kindness, sir, I should have had no supper; now can you have the goodness to tell me where or how I can dispose of this handkerchief, to procure me the means of obtaining a lodging for the night?" The man took the handkerchief, and, after carefully

examining it, said it was a tolerably good one, and asked Charles how much he wanted for it. "I should be very thankful," replied he, "if you will give me sixpence."

"I am afraid, my lad, you stole it, as you are willing to part with it for so small a sum."

"No, sir, I assure you I did not steal it;" exclaimed Charles with earnestness; "it was by accident that that handkerchief came into my possession."

"Well, well, boy, it is nothing to me how you came by it, but it is well worth a shilling, which I will give you; here, take the money, and as you want a bed, go to the Black Lion in the next street, to the right, and tell the landlord that David Sanders sent you, and he will let you have a good bed cheap. There, there, I have no time to hear any histories," said he, breaking away from Charles, as the boy was beginning to unfold some of his story, "I have done what I can for you, and so good night."

Charles was very thankful for even present assistance, and making his way to the inn where he had been recommended, he passed a good night; and the next morning, having purchased a breakfast with the money that remained to him after paying for his bed, he set out in better spirits than he had for some time felt, and made his way once more to the river-side. Remembering where the S— steam-boat set out from, he hastened to the place and inquired for Captain X—, when he was told

that he had given up the vessel, and was gone to live in the country. It was in vain that he applied to any one else to take him down the river; he could not even obtain a hearing; and after having been pushed about till he was tired, and told he was in the way by the busy throng on the wharf, he turned away in despair, and wandered for hours along the streets, wholly incapable of forming any plan of action. At last, worn out with fatigue, he seated himself at the entrance of a large market, where, having rested for a time, he was glad to deaden the cravings of appetite, by picking up and eating pea-shells and scraps of vegetables, that lay scattered about. While he was thus employed, his attention was drawn to two boys near him, who were disputing about some papers that the youngest held in his hand: "I will have them," said the big boy.

"No, you shall not," cried the other; "you took them from me last time, and so you have many times before."

"I do not care for that," said the first speaker, endeavouring to snatch the papers from the little boy's hand; "I don't care, and I will have them."

"It is a shame to use the child so, Thompson," said a neatly dressed little girl; who, like Charles, was looking on; "you are always robbing him of his bills."

"What does he want to do?" inquired Charles of the girl.

"He wants," replied she, "to get the child's bills

away from him, that he may sell them for his own profit; the little boy's father is a printer, and every now and then he gives his son some bills for himself; but Thompson is always on the watch, and whenever he can, he takes them away from him."

"He shall not have them this time, however," said Charles; as at that moment he observed Thompson force the child's property from him, and run off with it; "he shall restore the papers, or we will have a good fight for them." So saying, Charles hastened after Thompson, and coming up with him, desired him to restore the bills to the little boy.

"And who are you, I should like to know?" demanded Thompson with a contemptuous glance; "what business have you to interfere between us?"

"You have no right to take away what belongs to that other boy," said Charles; "and I desire you will give him back his bills directly."

"No I won't," answered Thompson, "and nobody shall make me."

"Yes, I will make you," answered Charles.

"You will, will you?" angrily responded Thompson; "then take that for your impertinent interference," and suiting the action to the words, he aimed a heavy blow at Charles. Charles was aware of his intention, and warding off the stroke, caught hold of Thompson's arm. "Now," said he, "will you give up those papers quietly, or will you force me to make you?"

"I have already told you that I will not."

"Then we will have a fight for them."

"Ay, and welcome; you do not think you have any chance with me, do you—I, who am at least a head taller? but come on; I long to punish you for your impudence."

But Thompson had wholly miscalculated, in imagining that he should beat his antagonist; for Charles, though younger and smaller, was very strong and muscular, and possessed uncommon activity; added to which, he had good judgment, and was cool and collected; while, on the contrary, Thompson fought in a passion. The contest was soon at an end, Charles gained a complete victory, and handed over the bills to their rightful owner.

"I am glad you beat," said the little girl, who had followed to see how the affair would terminate; "Thompson is a coward, as well as ill-natured; you ought," continued she, addressing the boy who had been the cause of the affray, "to be much obliged, and you should give your protector one of the bills for himself."

"Here's one, and thank you," said the little boy.

"But of what use will it be to me," inquired Charles; "what is it?"

"Why, don't you know?" exclaimed the girl, with surprise; "why, it is a bill of the play! Look, yon great house is the theatre, and you must go and offer your bill to some one who is going to the play; and if you can sell it, you will get a penny for it."

Charles said, "he was obliged for the information;"

and hastened off to a street which was so thronged that he thought, among the number of persons passing, some one must be going to the play. He chose his situation well, but unluckily there were several other venders of bills in the street as well as himself; and whether it was that he was not fortunate in the persons to whom he addressed himself, or that he wanted the assurance to force himself into notice, no one would purchase his bill; and after a time, he encountered two great boys, who pushed him aside, desiring him to go out of the street, saying, he was on their beat, and that he had no right to come there. Charles doubted the truth of this assertion, but he was not unwilling to go, for he thought it would be better to try his chance in a situation where he had not so many competitors. He therefore turned into another street, and kept wandering on, offering his bill for sale, till he had advanced a considerable distance from the theatre, and found himself in a square, which, judging from the grave, sober pace at which the passers-by were walking, did not seem to be an advantageous situation for his purpose. I am wrong here, thought he; and leaning back against the area railing of a house, he stood still to consider where he had better next bend his steps. While he was thus pondering, a gentleman with two young girls passed by, and had not advanced many paces, when the eldest perceiving that the string of her shoe was untied, stooped down to fasten it; and as she did so, laid her bag on the

pavement beside her, which—in her haste to rejoin her father and sister, who, unconscious that she had stopped behind, had walked on—she forgot to take up again. Charles observed the circumstance, and hastening to the spot, picked up the bag, and ran with it after the young lady. The whole party thanked Charles; and the little boy taking courage from the kind manner in which he was spoken to, begged them to be so good as to purchase his play-bill; "Would you be pleased to buy it?" said he: "if you do not, I do not think any one else will, for I have been trying to sell it for above an hour, and cannot."

"We are not going to the play," replied the gentleman; "but I will with pleasure give ——."

"Papa," interrupted the young lady, whose bag Charles had restored; "papa, that is the very same boy that came down our chimney, and then ran away." At these words, Charles suddenly recognised the group before him to be Captain Belgrave and his two daughters; and with an indistinct feeling of dread or shame, he hardly knew which, he was on the point of running away again, when, recollecting that there had been nothing really blamable in his conduct as related to that memorable night, he recovered his composure, and waited in respectful silence to listen to Captain Belgrave, who he saw was about to address him.

The captain began, by inquiring what had induced him to run away from his house; and then

asked him what had become of the men who had intended to rob him. Charles assigned the same reason as he had formerly done, for so abruptly quitting Captain Belgrave's house, namely, his unwillingness to appear as a witness against his parent; and, he added, that neither Captain Belgrave nor any one else had anything further to dread from his poor father, for that he was dead. He then spoke of his beloved mother, and with tears streaming from his eyes, told of the bitter grief he was enduring at not being able to find her, or learn any tidings of her; and he entreated Captain Belgrave to put him in the right way of discovering her, and in the mean time to point out some employment for him to keep him from starving. Captain Belgrave listened with interest to the lad's recital; and his daughters exclaimed, "Do, papa, pray do something to assist the poor boy."

"Yes, my dears," replied their father, "it is my intention to do so. I not only consider it my duty, but my inclination prompts me to aid him, for there is an air of truth and honesty about the child, that leads me to think he would not be unworthy of any kindness that might be shown him. Now, attend to me," continued he, addressing Charles; "I am going to spend the evening with my children in town, but you shall go to my house. I will put you on a stage, and you shall carry a note to my housekeeper: she will take care of you, and give you a comfortable bed, where you may obtain the rest you so much

need; and in the morning I will consult with you as to the steps we had better take to achieve the end you naturally have so much at heart." Charles was so overcome with this unexpected good fortune, and so much moved by Captain Belgrave's kindness, that he was quite unable to express the deep sense of gratitude that he felt; he stood unable to utter a word, and quite incapable of thanking his benefactor for his goodness. Captain Belgrave, aware of the nature of his feelings, kindly laid his hand upon his shoulder, and said, in cheerful encouraging tones, "Don't trouble yourself to thank me, my lad; but cheer up, better days I dare say are coming. Now, follow us, and we will see you on to the coach that is to convey you to a place where you will be safe and comfortable for the present." Accordingly Captain Belgrave took Charles to the inn from whence the stage set out; and giving him a note to his housekeeper, he consigned him to the care of the coachman, with an order to set him down at the gate of his house. "You remember the garden with the large weeping willow on the lawn, you will know the house again," said Captain Belgrave, kindly nodding to him, as the coachman seated the little boy on the box beside him. "Yes, sir," replied Charles, as the coach drove off. But he was so overjoyed at this fortunate meeting with so kind a friend, and the hope he entertained of being reunited to his mother, together with the, to him, novel situation of being rattled through the streets, and whirled along the high-road on the top

of a stage-coach, that the driver had put him down at the end of his journey, and wished him good evening, before he was well aware whereabouts he was; and it was not until the next morning, when sleep had recruited his senses, that the tumult of his feelings had subsided into anything like a calm and regular channel.

Chapter X.

"'Good morning, Mrs. Spicer," said Captain Belgrave to his housekeeper, as she entered the breakfast-room the day after Charles's arrival; "I sent you a little guest yesterday evening, how did you find him?"

"O la! sir," replied Mrs. Spicer, with eagerness, as though she could not deliver herself fast enough of what she had to say: "Oh, sir, he is the strangest little urchin that ever I saw."

"How, what?" demanded Captain Belgrave; "I hope he has not behaved improperly."

"Oh! I do not mean that," replied the housekeeper, "but he don't eat."

"Is that all?" said Captain Belgrave, unable to repress a smile at such a circumstance being made matter of complaint.

"No, sir, that is *not* all; but you must think that odd. I thought, from your note, and from the

famished appearance of the child, that he would be very hungry, so I made him a nice savoury mess, such as I could have eaten myself, and placed it before him; and if you will believe me, sir, he did little more than taste it. Oh! thought I, you are like the rest of your tribe—beggars I mean, sir—dainty; so says I to him, 'Perhaps you do not like your supper, it is not good enough?' upon which he looked up at me quite surprised like, and said, 'It is very good indeed, ma'am, excellent.' 'Then why don't you eat?' said I. 'Because joy prevents me,' replied he; and down he laid his spoon, and sat looking out into the garden; when presently he got up and went out, and stood for a long time gazing up at the top of the house, and the chimney."

"Poor child!" observed Captain Belgrave; "he was thinking of his former visit here."

"Visit here, sir!" repeated Mrs. Spicer, in a tone of surprise; "was he ever here before?"

"Yes, once; before you came into my service; but go on, if you have anything more to tell; what did the boy do next?"

"Why, sir, he next took a turn down the gravel walk, and kept poking his head forward to observe one particular part of the fence at the bottom; he then came back, and sat himself down on the door-steps, and cried as though his heart would break. After a time he left off, and wiping his eyes, he came into the house again; and says I to myself, 'if it was joy spoiled your appetite before, perhaps

sorrow has now made you hungry;' so I said to him, 'Shall I warm up your mess again, or would you like a slice of bread and butter?' but he thanked me very civilly, and said that he did not wish for anything more, for that he had had quite enough. Now, sir, to tell you the truth, I began to feel quite puzzled about the lad, and to wonder who you had sent here; for there he stood, all in rags, not a thread about him worth sixpence, looking the picture of famine, not choosing to eat, and yet speaking as if he had been bred and born a gentleman; so to satisfy my curiosity a little, I thought I would ask him a few questions."

"Ah! Mrs. Spicer," interrupted Captain Belgrave, "I ought to have told you to leave him to himself; the boy has been in affliction, and he ought to have been suffered to recover in quiet."

"Oh! as to that," replied Mrs. Spicer, "he did not meet much disturbance from me; for though I spoke to him two or three times, he seemed scarce to hear me, and only said yes or no, to every thing I asked. So, sir, as it was getting duskish, I went down and lit a candle; and presently I came up and asked him if he would like to go to his bed-room. 'Yes, ma'am,' said he, 'thank you, I shall be very glad.' Well, thinks I, I am happy that there is *something* that makes you glad; and with that I showed him to his room, and left the light with him. In about a quarter of an hour, I thought I would go and fetch his candle away; for you know, sir, I am

much afraid of fire; so up I went, and while I was stopping a moment to get my breath before I went in, I heard him talking away to himself as though he was crazed; and crazed I certainly thought he was, and that was why he refused the beautiful supper I made him. Well, so I opened the door, and in I went, but I could make nothing out, for he was on the other side, behind the bed-curtains; and on hearing me, he came round and looked at me so meek and quiet, that I could not think at the moment of anything to say; so I asked him if there was anything he wanted. 'Yes, if you please, ma'am,' he answered, 'I should be much obliged to you for——.' For what? Now, sir, can you guess what this boy could want? why, sir, nothing in life but a needle and thread. I stared at him, but he took no notice, and only said, 'Dark thread if you please.' Ay, dark if you like, said I to myself; just which sort pleases you best; and off I set to get it him. Now, when I brought it, I did not shut the door quite close, when I went out, but left it a little on the jar like; for then, thought I, may be I shall be able to tell better what you are after, young chap, and hear what it is you talk to yourself so about; for the door of that green room, sir, shuts so tight, that though one can hear when there's a talking going on, one can't very well make out what is said."

"So much the better, I think," observed Captain

Belgrave; "but go on with your history, Mrs. Spicer."

"I went down stairs then, sir, and began setting things to rights below; but somehow I felt curious about the lad above, and I could not settle right on to anything; so I comes up stairs again, but bless me! I could hear him all the way I come, talking and going on to himself louder than ever; so I crept along the passage as quiet as ever I could, and stopped to listen at the door of his room; and what in all the world should it be, but the boy saying his prayers!—why, sir, he prayed as though his heart and soul were in it; he prayed about his mother and his father, and he thanked God for his mercies to himself: and he blessed you and the young ladies, and a great deal that I can't recollect to tell you; but a parson could not have been more in earnest, nor have made use of better language. I stood quite struck, sir, but I suppose I made a noise, for presently the lad came round to the door, and shut and bolted it. He did not see me, for he did not open the door; but I was quite put out, for I could not tell what he was going to do with the needle and thread."

"That must have been a sad disappointment to you, Mrs Spicer," said Captain Belgrave.

"Very true, sir," replied the housekeeper, gravely, wholly unobservant of the somewhat sarcastic manner in which her master made his remark.

"Very true; but I found out all how and about it the next morning; but I am not come to that yet, I must go on regularly with my history."

"You must make haste then, and bring your history to a close," interrupted Captain Belgrave, "or I shall have finished my breakfast, and be obliged to go out before you have concluded."

"Yes, sir, I will go on immediately; let me see, where was I? Oh! I was going to tell you that I sleep, as you know, sir, next to the green room, and whether it was that the boy waked me or not, I can't tell, but not a wink of sleep did I get after four o'clock, for there was he, up and about, with his windows open long before that time in the morning."

"Did he come out of his room?" inquired Captain Belgrave.

"No, sir, he did not, and I was very curious to know what he could be after; and I was anxious for the time to come, that I might go to his room and see what he had been doing. At last I went; and there was he, clean washed, with his hair neatly combed, sitting, with a towel fastened over his shoulders, mending his jacket; and his linen, which he had been washing, lying on the window-seat, to dry. I can't be certain what I said at seeing him at work, but he told me that his mother had taught him to use his needle, as she said a sailor should know how: and really, sir, 'twas curious to see how the boy had managed: he had sewn and darned up all the rents I had seen the night before; and he

had taken a piece here, and cut a piéce there, of his dress, for a patch, just so as he could best contrive it; and made his old things look quite tidy. 'And you wash, too!' said I, looking at his shirt collar, which he had rubbed so as to make it look quite white; 'I could not think what you could be after: I have heard you up best part of the night.'

"'I hope, ma'am,' said he, 'I did not disturb you;' and he coloured as red as scarlet: 'I am sure, I am sorry, but I was ashamed to appear before the captain and the young ladies, such a dirty figure:—I am not much fit now,' added he. 'Oh you will do very well,' said I, interrupting him; for I could not help feeling pity for the poor boy: and I took the liberty, sir, of assuring him that you would not mind his dress much."

"Not at all, you might have said, my good Mrs. Spicer: now go and call this little oddity of yours, and tell him I want to speak to him before I go out."

Mrs. Spicer obeyed her master; and, in the mean time, the young ladies, Rose and Emma, had joined their father; and Charles, notwithstanding the pains he had taken with his toilet, and the patronizing tone of Mrs. Spicer, stood abashed at the half-open door, and wanted courage to enter.

"Come in, my good boy," said Captain Belgrave, kindly; "come in; there are none but friends here. Look," continued he, as Charles timidly advanced to the table, where his kind protector sat: "look,

here is an advertisement that I have drawn up, which I will have inserted both in the London and country newspapers, and I hope, by that means, we shall learn tidings of your mother. I am now going from home, for a few days, for I have had a letter this morning to summon me to the house of a relative whose death we have been long expecting, and who has now just expired, but you may remain here till I come back."

"I am very much obliged to you, sir," said Charles, "but——"

"But what?" inquired Captain Belgrave, as Charles stopped short in what he was going to say, and, blushing deeply, cast his eyes on the ground: "but what? Speak; do not be afraid."

"I was going to have said, sir, that I should be very glad if I could do anything to deserve the benefits you so kindly bestow on me, but I fear there is nothing in which I can be of service to a gentleman like you:—my mother, sir," added he, after a little hesitation, "has always taught me that I should never feel contented to live upon the bounty of others, but always endeavour to make myself independent."

"That is a right feeling," said Captain Belgrave, "and I applaud you for it; but this is a particular case, and you may set your mind at rest that you are not doing wrong by remaining here quietly for a few days, while steps are being taken to ascertain the fate of your mother. Still, as you like employ-

ment, I dare say you will be able to find something to do; for instance, you may help Mrs. Spicer in some of her household concerns, and you can assist my daughters in their garden, and then you can improve yourself in reading. You can read, I conclude?" added Captain Belgrave, in a tone of inquiry.

"I love reading," answered Charles; and looking up as he spoke, his eyes rested on the well-filled book-shelves with which the room was furnished.

"You love reading, do you?" said Captain Belgrave, after he had for a few moments contemplated the look of intelligence which had lit up Charles's pallid countenance, as he gazed upon the literary treasures around him. "You love reading?" repeated he; "what sort of reading have you been used to; and what do you prefer?"

"I have read history a good deal, sir," replied Charles, "both ancient and modern; and I like travels, and biography; but above all," continued he, carried away by the enthusiasm of a darling subject, "the biography of men who have raised themselves from nothing to become characters eminent for learning or virtue."

As Charles spoke, Captain Belgrave gazed at the little speaker, and could not repress a feeling of surprise at the strange contrast afforded by his extreme youth and shabby exterior, with the manner of expressing himself, and the taste for a pursuit which he thought would have been far beyond his years and station in life.

"You may read, then," said he, "as much as you please, only be careful of the books. And now, my dears," continued he, turning to his daughters, "I must go; you will be kind to this poor boy, I am sure. God bless you both; good by.—Stay, there is one thing more, I had almost forgotten; here, Charles, here is a suit of clothes of mine; they are not so much worn but what they will make you a good serviceable dress; take them and consult your friend, Mrs. Spicer, about them, and with her advice, and the assistance of a tailor, I hope to see you more comfortably clothed on my return home." So saying, the kind-hearted captain shook hands with Charles, and having once more bid adieu to his daughters, proceeded on his journey.

The lady with whose decease Captain Belgrave had that morning been made acquainted, had been for some time in a declining state of health, and latterly her sufferings had increased to such a degree as to make her death an event to be much desired. She had been, till within the last month or two, for many years resident on the Continent; and though in frequent communication, by letter, with her brother, she had latterly seen but little of him; and to his interesting daughters she was almost wholly a stranger. Under such circumstances it was not likely that Rose and Emma should deeply lament the death of their aunt: still, the loss of a relative, whom they hoped one day to have known and loved, and the absence of their father, threw a gloom over

their naturally buoyant spirits, which they were glad to dissipate by occasional intercourse with the little guest whom charity had introduced to them. But if the young ladies derived amusement from conversing with Charles, his satisfaction was unbounded whenever they permitted him to be in their company. With eager haste he every morning despatched the little business that Mrs. Spicer had for him, and then, with a book in his hand, he would steal quietly into their study, and seat himself in a corner of the room to read, or else by any little services in his power endeavour to render himself useful to his young benefactresses. He would search for Miss Rose's music, and place it on the stand before her harp, or rub the colours for Miss Emma's drawings, or he would run into the garden to gather a flower for her to copy, or would search through books of history for some interesting subject for her sister to illustrate. And, after a day or two, observing how the harp was tuned, he asked permission to spare the young ladies the trouble, and being gifted by nature with a fine ear, and taste for music, he put it in perfect tune in as short a time as Rose herself could have done.

"Emma," said Rose, one morning, to her sister, as she entered the room, "I have been searching for the last half-hour to find a circumstance in history that I think would make a good subject for an historical picture: it relates to two brothers, who were joint-heirs of a throne, and jealousy made one

seek to kill the other, when the brother who was attacked flew for safety into his mother's arms. Do you recollect where the fact is mentioned?"

"No," replied Emma, "indeed I do not; I am sorry that I cannot assist you."

"If you will allow me to say," said Charles, who was engaged at the further end of the room, fixing some drawings into an album: "you will find the story related in the Roman history. Caracalla and Geta were the names of the brothers; if you please I will go and fetch the volume from below, in which the circumstance is mentioned." And running off, he soon returned with the place open in his hand.

"How clever he is!" said Rose to Emma, in French, as she cast her eyes on the page, and saw that Charles had found what she had been so long seeking for. "I am afraid he is much better informed in history than we are, who have had such excellent opportunities for study."

Charles's cheeks were crimsoned with blushes as he listened to these words of praise from one he thought a superior order of being, and whom he was most anxious to please; still he felt embarrassed at the idea of hearing observations which were not meant for his ear, as they were uttered in a language with which, though perfectly conversant, he was naturally supposed to be ignorant. He hesitated for a moment what to do; but, upon Emma's beginning to join her sister in commendation of him, he determined, though confused at being obliged to admit

the fact, that he had heard his own praises, to acquaint the young ladies with the circumstance of the French language being familiar to him. Having done so, the two girls expressed much surprise at the intelligence; and, though they did not at all doubt the truth of Charles's assertion, they desired, child-like, to have oral demonstration of the fact, that this strange little boy really did read and speak French; and away ran Emma to fetch a French book, to hear him read; and Rose, who was by no means a bad proficient in the language, began a conversation, which was carried on, on both sides, with tolerable ease and fluency.

"Who taught you?" inquired Emma.

"My mother," replied Charles.

"You must have had great pains taken with your education," observed Rose, "and yet there are some things that puzzle me. You are well-informed in history, and on a variety of subjects, and you have grammatical knowledge, and yet, without being vulgar, you have some peculiar expressions, and a singular manner every now and then of pronouncing your words: it is as though those who instructed you had not thought that writing and speaking our own language with correctness and elegance had been an object of the first importance."

"What you remark," answered Charles, "is most likely owing to my being a foreigner."

"Is that the case?" exclaimed the girls, with surprise.

"Yes," answered Charles; "I fear I must not call myself English; but," continued he, for the love of improvement was strongly implanted in his mind, "I should take it as a great kindness if you would be so good as to correct the mistakes I make, and put me into the right method of expressing myself when I use foreign idioms."

"I will, with pleasure," said Rose, to whom Charles more particularly addressed himself; "you shall write English exercises and themes, and I will correct them; as far, at least, as I am able; and in return, you shall teach me things that you know and I do not; we can mutually improve each other."

"I think," said Charles, "that it will be right to try and mend my language; it will not make me too refined, and make me more unwilling to return to laborious employments. I know my mother has always told me to avail myself of every opportunity of acquiring knowledge, even though I was liable to be called away every hour from such studies to toil for my daily bread. She has often told me I ought to be prepared for whatever might happen; I do not think I know exactly what she meant, but I think it was, that if I was always to be a poor boy, I might labour willingly for my livelihood, or if I was to rise to be a gentleman—"

Charles stopped short, and blushed deeply, fearing that what he was about to say might appear like arrogance in one circumstanced as he was.

"You would like to be a gentleman?" said Rose, who had marked Charles's embarrassment, and rightly divined the cause; "you would like to be a gentleman, should you not? there is no harm in owning it, I think."

"I should, indeed," said Charles, with fervour; "I have before wished it; but since I have been here, and you and Miss Emma have so kindly permitted me to join in your pursuits, I seem as though I could not be happy to lead a different sort of life; and I feel great dislike to the thought of returning to the drudgery of labour. It is these feelings, and the fear that I was getting to do what was not right, made me consider about improving my language, when you were so good as to offer to teach me—but, I do not know," continued he, after a few moments' reflection, "I believe I am wrong after all; if I could but be restored once again to my dear mother, I think I should not care what I did; indeed, I am sure I could labour cheerfully, and like it, from morning to night, to maintain her, for I must work for her now my father is gone."

"I sincerely hope you will soon hear of her," said Rose.

"You observed just now," said Emma, "that you were not born in England; I should like to know what is your native place."

"Did I never tell you?" said Charles, with surprise.

"No," replied Rose; "and though we have often

wished to know something of your history, we did not like to ask you, as we feared it might distress you."

"I will tell you with pleasure," said Charles; "I am a native of Florida, East Florida, just by ——, stay, where is the atlas? I will show you: I was looking at a very good map of the country this morning—yes, here it is, here is the Shark's-head river; now, where is the creek that runs nearly up to our dwelling,—this, I think, must be it; let me see though, how is the latitude?—yes, this must be it. Look, Miss Emma, it was just about here that our house and land were situated; yes, there was my dear, my happy home: there stood the house, with the large hickory-tree overshadowing it, and behind it lay the lake, with the orange-island; and there was my dear mother's bower, covered with odoriferous plants; there were the gay flowers that bloomed around, and the gorgeous-coloured birds that flew from tree to tree; and there were all my pretty pets,—my mock-bird, and my dear tame monax!—O happy home! O much-loved spot!" cried Charles, carried away by the nature of the subject, and quite forgetful that he had listeners,—"happy, happy home!—where is it now?—all burned and destroyed; my father, once so rich and prosperous, dead; and my mother—" He could not proceed, and, overcome with the bitterness of his feelings, he hid his face in his hands and wept aloud. His little auditors sympathized in his distress, and could almost have wept

for company; and, after the first burst of grief had passed away, they offered such consolation as lay in their power, and endeavoured by kind expressions to soothe the poor boy's affliction. Ever attentive to the feeling of others, Charles soon checked his tears, and, exercising a control over his sorrowful emotions, proceeded to give his young friends the history of his little eventful life. Rose and Emma listened with the deepest attention, and were highly interested by the narration. His account of the climate, natural productions, and the mode of life pursued by himself and his parents, excited great interest; and numberless were the questions that were put to him after that day. Charles delighted to talk of scenes, the recollection of which, though intermixed with much that was painful, was still fraught with the joys of his happy childhood when under the fostering care of his mother. Many an evening the youthful trio passed in these interesting conversations; and even when the summer twilight had deepened into night, and the moon shone high in the heavens, still the housekeeper was entreated not yet to bring lights, but to allow them to sit a little longer to talk.

Chapter XI.

Captain Belgrave's absence from home had been protracted much beyond the time he expected, and it was not before the expiration of three weeks that he returned. He had in the mean time written to his daughters, and desired that Charles might be told that he had given orders, in case no tidings were heard of his mother, to have the advertisements again inserted in the newspapers. Could Charles have been at ease respecting his mother, these three weeks would have been to him a period of great enjoyment. There had been from the first a constant interchange of kindness between the three children, and now that they were well acquainted, they experienced for each other so great a degree of friendship, that they looked forward with pain to the time when they should be separated. Captain Belgrave's return had been anxiously looked for by the whole party, as an event which was to bring considerable accession of pleasure. He was a sensible, well-informed man, of mild and gentlemanly manners, and a most kind and affectionate father. To his daughters he was an object of the warmest love, and to Charles, of gratitude and respect. Every morning, the first thing uttered by the children when they met, was, "I hope papa will come back to-day;" "I hope Captain Belgrave will soon return;" and when night came, and still he did not

arrive, a wish was expressed that the morrow might bring him. But this event, so much desired, did not, when it arrived, cause the pleasure anticipated from it. Captain Belgrave, on his return home, although the same kind, benevolent creature, appeared to have undergone some great change. His was no longer the cheerful countenance that the beholder loved to gaze upon; his joyous laugh was now never heard, and, instead of seeking the company of his daughters, assisting in their studies, or delighting in their lively, intelligent conversation, he usually kept himself shut up in his room, and shunned all society. It seemed as though some grievous affliction, either mental or bodily, had laid hold of him. His housekeeper urged him to send for a physician; but he shook his head mournfully, and said medicine would do him no good. His children were much distressed, and, though they could not understand the nature of his grief, they sought to lessen it by every kindness and attention in their power. They went to his room, and strove to draw him from it, and they endeavoured to interest him by details of their young companion; they told him his story, and enlarged upon his talents and information, and praised the rectitude of his principles and the firmness of his character. Captain Belgrave's benevolent nature would not allow him to resist these kindly-meant efforts of his children to engage his attention, and to amuse him, and by degrees he suffered himself to be drawn from his

solitude; and, though the same melancholy hung over him, he no longer absented himself from his family, and gradually began once again to interest himself in the occupations of his daughters. Charles, too, shared his attention, and, already prepossessed in his favour, a more intimate acquaintance led him to look upon the boy as a child of no common merit; still, to his daughters, in private, he occasionally expressed an anxious wish, that his mother might arrive to claim him, and relieve him from the charge of him.

"Dear papa," said Emma, one morning, just after Captain Belgrave had been talking of Charles's leaving them: "you say that you like Charles, and that a parent might be proud of, and happy in having, such a son, and that my sister and I have improved much quicker since he has been our companion in our studies; how is it that you seem anxious for the time to come that he is to leave us? We had hoped —indeed, Rose and I were going to ask you, in case Charles's mother never came to take him away, to allow him to remain here always. I am sure he would be most grateful, and repay your kindness with the utmost duty and affection. Do, dear papa," continued she, twining her arms around her father's neck, and kissing him, "do consent."

"Will you, can you, dear papa?" said Rose, who, equally interested in the subject, joined her petition to her sister's.

"My little darling!" replied Captain Belgrave,

removing Emma's arm from around him, and placing her on his knee,—"my beloved Rose!" and, extending his hand to her, he drew her towards him, and pressed both his daughters affectionately to his heart. "My dearest children! you know full well how willing I am in general to consent to any wish of yours, and how desirous I am to promote your pleasure and happiness whenever I am able; but the request you now make is out of my power to grant. Charles cannot remain here, and, if his natural protector does not soon arrive to claim him, some situation must be found where he can procure the means of his own maintenance. I like the boy and esteem him, and, were I to allow myself to give way to the feeling, I could become so much attached to him, as to render parting very painful. I say this, to convince you that necessity alone compels me to deprive this friendless child of my protection and support." Captain Belgrave paused, a heavy sigh escaped him, and, resting his head on his little girl's shoulder, tears escaped from his eyes, and rolled slowly down his cheeks.

"Oh, dearest papa!" exclaimed she, "how sorry I am I asked you! I never meant to distress you."

"Dear, dear papa!" cried Rose, "do not think of our request,—forget that we ever made it; we know that you always judge best, what is right and proper for us."

"My dear good children! my poor girls!" said Captain Belgrave, brushing the tears from his eyes,

and gazing tenderly, first at one, and then at the other, "it is not you who have distressed me. I think not of myself, it is for you I grieve. I have sad intelligence to communicate; I have hitherto delayed speaking, in the hope of acquiring more firmness for the task, and I have sought for solitude that I might commune with my own heart, to discover how far I may have been blamable myself in this affair, and my conscience seems to tell me, that if I have erred in judgment, my motive was a right one."

At this moment Charles, who had been to a gardener's in the neighbourhood for a flower for Emma, entered with it in his hand. Upon seeing Captain Belgrave and his daughters engaged in earnest conversation, he was about immediately to retire, when Captain Belgrave, perceiving him, called to him to remain.

"We are not talking of anything," said he, kindly, to Charles, "which you may not hear; indeed, you gave rise to our conversation, and I have been making your little friends here very sorrowful by talking about your leaving us."

At these words the colour rushed into Charles's face, and tears started into his eyes as he stammered out, "Leave you, sir!"

"You wish your mother to rejoin you," said Captain Belgrave, who feared he had been too abrupt in announcing Charles's approaching departure; "you wish to live again with your mother, do you not?"

"O, yes," said Charles, recovering himself, "it is my earnest wish to see her again; if I could be with her it would take from the pain of parting from you and the young ladies; at least, I should part with less—less—" Charles could not proceed; the idea of separation from friends who had been so kind to him quite overcame him, and, notwithstanding his struggle to prevent it, he burst into tears.

"What, more tears!" said Captain Belgrave, endeavouring to smother his emotion, and speak with composure; "I am an unlucky man,—that I, who would wish never to cause anything but smiles and cheerfulness, should occasion so many tears to flow. But come, cheer up, my little man, and listen to me:—your mother I still hope may return to you: I have given orders again to-day to have the advertisement repeated, but should she not appear, I must look out for some situation in which I can place you; where you can support yourself. Had not a sad change come over our fortunes, I would have kept you for ever with me; but you will hear the relation that I am about to make to my daughters. You, my dears," continued he, addressing his daughters, "are acquainted with some of the early passages of my life, but as Charles is not, I will, in order that he may the better understand the nature of my circumstances, state, that my father died when I was a very young man, deeply involved in debt, leaving me heir to an entailed estate of about five or six hundred a year. At a very early age, my father chose

for me a profession, and though not exactly the one I should have fixed on, had it been left to my own choice, still, in after-years, I felt thankful to him that he had not suffered me to grow up an idle gentleman, but had placed in my hands the means of independence. Circumstances threw me a great deal among persons, in whom I saw conduct the very reverse of that pursued by my poor father. Their good example was not without its effect upon me, and, from the moment I came into the possession of my estate, I began to save the income arising from it, and determined never to rest satisfied till I had paid all my father's debts. The lady I married cheerfully acquiesced in this wish of mine, and year after year we kept reducing the amount of my father's debts, till the birth of a daughter led us to consider how far it was incumbent on us to make a provision for her future benefit; when, in process of time, a son being added to our family, our minds were relieved by knowing that, should I die, the estate would remain to those I left behind. You have often, my dears," continued Captain Belgrave, more particularly addressing his daughters, "heard me speak of my sister; but, as I always looked forward to your becoming acquainted with her, and wished you to love and respect her, I never mentioned any of the peculiarities of her character. She was several years my senior, and to this circumstance, together with a dissimilarity of tastes and disposition, it was probably owing that there never existed

much cordiality between us. I have often lamented the circumstance, and I may, perhaps, in justice to myself, say, that I never omitted any opportunity of showing her kindness, and exerted myself to the utmost to win her affection. Pride and ambition were the prominent features of her character, and it was with infinite satisfaction to herself that she became the wife of a wealthy old baronet, whom she had fascinated by her talents and accomplishments, and over whom, during his life, she held despotic sway, and at his death was left mistress of a large fortune, at her sole disposal. I have omitted to say, that, however little unanimity there was between us, there was one feeling, that my sister and I shared in common, namely, dislike at the idea that our parent should have died in debt; such a circumstance was very galling to her pride, and, after she discovered that I was paying my father's debts, she wrote me word that she highly approved of my conduct in so doing, and that she would have lent her aid also, but that the style of living, which it was incumbent upon a person of her rank to keep up, prevented her sparing any money for that purpose. Your little brother's life was not long spared to us, and grief for his loss so preyed upon my poor wife's health, already injured by residence in the unhealthy climate where duty had called me, that she did not long survive him. Some time after this twofold affliction, I returned to England, where I suffered so severe an attack of a complaint which has often threatened my

life, that, thinking I should not recover, I summoned all my strength to write a letter to my sister, such as I thought might move her pity, in behalf of my two little girls. She lost no time in replying to me, and, after condoling with me on the subject of my illness, informed me that she herself was in a lingering state, from which it was most probable she should never recover. She then desired that I would appoint a guardian for my children, and that it was her intention to leave them heirs to her property. She added, that she had no one else to whom to leave her wealth, and that she thought my conduct merited that she should make her will in favour of my daughters. The delight that this letter caused me, produced such a beneficial effect upon my health, that from the moment I received it I began to recover."

"Dear papa," exclaimed Rose and Emma, "how good it was in you to have been so thoughtful about us! How kind of you to have remembered us when you were so ill!"

"Alas! my poor children," replied Captain Belgrave; "I know not if I can acquit myself of blame towards you; God knows I wished to do what I considered to be my duty, but I will go on with what I have to communicate. From time to time, after the receipt of this letter, I continued to hear from your aunt, and though she stated herself always to be in a declining way, she, as you are aware, still lived up to the time that I quitted you about a month ago. She always mentioned you in her

letters, and stated that her purpose was still the same, to leave you her property. Thus amply provided for, I had no hesitation in employing everything I could save from our income, in my favourite project of liquidating my father's debts. I have not spared in giving you a liberal education; but in other respects, we have lived with strict economy."

"We have been perfectly happy," observed Rose.

"Nor ever felt the want of anything," added Emma; "what can it be that distresses you so, dear papa?"

"You will learn too soon, my child," said Captain Belgrave; "upon the death of my sister," continued he, "I was summoned, as you know, to her residence, to pay the last duties, and be present at the opening of her will. Upon my arrival, I made many inquiries respecting her latter moments; and my mind was so occupied with the painful details which I had been listening to, and so certain was I of the disposition of my sister's property, that when the will was being read, I scarcely paid any attention to it, till after a few trifling bequests were gone over, I was aroused by the astounding words:—'I give and bequeath the whole of my property, real and personal, to endow a school for the education and maintenance of a certain number of girls, to be brought up in the peculiar tenets of my much-esteemed and pious friends, Mrs. Moaner, and Miss Evangelina Moodie.'"

"I was astonished—overwhelmed: I could scarcely

credit the evidence of my senses; and I caused the sentence to be read and re-read, before I could bring myself to believe that I had heard rightly. I thought there must be some mistake, and that a forged document had been substituted for the legal testament; but the lawyer, who made the will two days before my sister's death, assured me that no deception had been practised; and that when called upon to execute her commands, he had incurred her displeasure, by urging the claims her relatives had upon her; and that she had cut the matter short by saying, that her property was her own—that she was serving the ends of religion by thus disposing of it; and that if he refused to make her will, she should send for some one else to do it. After I had in some measure recovered from the first shock of this overwhelming news, I endeavoured to ascertain what could have induced my sister to make this sudden and extraordinary change in the disposition of her property, and I learned, that a few weeks before her death, some self-styled religious ladies had forced themselves into her presence, under the plea of administering consolation and assistance to the sick; and that by degrees they had ingratiated themselves into her confidence, and by their wild and fanatical conversation, so worked upon her mind as to induce her to think that the best method of ensuring her salvation, was to do all in her power to increase the spread of those peculiar doctrines, which had filled her mind with terror, and deprived her

death-bed of the consolation to be derived from the religion of a mild and merciful Saviour; thus robbing two innocent girls of their lawful expectations, and sending their father broken-hearted to the grave." Captain Belgrave paused, overcome with the anguish of his feelings, and the painful effort it had been to him to make these sad communications to his daughters. After a time, he resumed: "there is now but one trifling sum remaining, and all my father's debts are cleared off; but this period, so fondly anticipated by me, and which I intended should have made a sort of jubilee in my life, affords me now no pleasure. My mind is torn with conflicting feelings; sometimes I think I have done my duty in discharging my father's debts; and then again I am distracted at the thought that I have made no provision for my children, and I reflect that their welfare ought to have been my own care. Yes, I feel that I should not have trusted to the promises of any one. I am not now a young man, and frequent illnesses have made such inroads in my constitution, that I have a presentiment that I shall not live long, and sorrow is quickening the work of disease."

"Oh! papa," exclaimed both his children, "do not, do not talk of dying, you must not, cannot leave us." "And, my dear papa," said Rose, whose good sense and judgment was beyond her years, "do not lament that you have paid grandpapa's debts, for I should never have been happy, nor would Emma I am sure, while we had the

knowledge that industrious tradespeople had been deprived of their just dues, by any one of our name."

"Thanks, my child," said Captain Belgrave, "thanks for the comfort you would impart to your unhappy father; but, poor little girl, you know not what you will have to encounter, and the privations you and your dear sister will have to endure, when you are left without fortune and without friends. Had it pleased Providence to have spared the life of my boy," resumed he, after a short pause, during which he had been struggling for composure; "this heavy blow, this cruel act of my sister's, would have fallen comparatively unfelt, and I should, for his own sake as well as yours, have brought your brother up to a profession; and *my* son would have taken care of his sisters, and shared with them the inheritance which the accident of birth gave to him alone. Dear boy, infant as he was, he showed great intelligence, and gave promise of uncommon sweetness of disposition; but, said Captain Belgrave, checking himself, I will not trust myself to talk of him; a merciful Providence orders everything for the best, and to His will I will endeavour to resign myself without a murmur." So saying, he reverently bent his head, and covering his face with his hands, remained for a few moments silent: when looking up, and endeavouring to assume a cheerfulness of look and tone, he said, "Now, my dears, I am going to call upon you for exertion, fortunately application is no labour to

you, and you have no distaste to study, therefore it will be no punishment; but you must prepare yourselves for a time, when you will be called upon to support yourselves by your talents. The information you have acquired, and the accomplishments you have practised, must now be increased, and looked upon, not as they have hitherto been, for your own gratification, and to make you ornaments of society, but to afford you the means of subsistence. While I live, I will devote my utmost attention to the furtherance of this desired object; and when it shall please God to take me from you ——."

"Oh! papa," exclaimed his children, interrupting him; "do not finish what you were going to say—you will, you must be better, and we will be so good, and take such pains to please you, that it will make you well."

Captain Belgrave faintly smiled, for he would not distress his children by urging anything more on the subject; but he felt to himself like a man whose days are numbered. "But where is Charles?" said he, wishing to divert his daughters' attention from melancholy subjects; "I thought he had been here."

"He was so, papa," answered Emma, "till just this minute; but he is now gone out."

"He is," added Rose, "much affected by what you have been telling us."

"You now know, my dears," resumed Captain Belgrave, "why I cannot consent to retain with us this poor little orphan boy; every possible saving

and retrenchment must be made, your welfare demands it; but I will do my best to procure some situation, where he may be kindly treated, as well as obtain the means of earning his own livelihood. I am going this morning to town, to confer with my solicitor, whom I have requested to endeavour to find an occupation for him superior to bodily drudgery; but I fear we shall have much difficulty in succeeding ——;" "but we shall see," continued he, in an encouraging tone, observing the anxious looks of his children, as to the future destiny of their little favourite and companion; "let us at any rate hope; who knows but we may see Charles a great man yet? I will go immediately, and see if I cannot bring you good news. Farewell my dears for the present." So saying, Captain Belgrave set off for London.

Heavily passed this day to Rose and Emma; they mourned over their father's precarious state of health; vague anticipations of future misery haunted their minds, and to add to their discomfort, their little friend Charles had disappeared, no one knew where. The dinner-hour had arrived and passed, without Captain Belgrave's return; but as when he went to London, it sometimes occurred that he remained to dine with a friend, this circumstance created no alarm; and before the hour of tea arrived, his children had the pleasure of welcoming him home. They eagerly inquired if he had seen anything of their little guest; and they were greatly disappointed to hear that he had not; and many

times in the course of the evening they questioned their father to know if he could at all surmise what had become of Charles. At length, the gate-bell sounded, small footsteps were heard running up the gravel-walk; and in a few moments, Charles, out of breath and much agitated, entered the room where Captain Belgrave and his daughters were sitting.

"I am come, sir," said he, stopping short before his protector, and drawing his breath as though he had just wound himself up to some daring resolution; "I am come to bid you good by, and to thank you for your great kindness to me; and the young ladies I wish to thank—to thank them for ———" here Charles was quite overcome, and unable to utter another word, he burst into tears."

Why, what is the matter with you, my little man?" inquired Captain Belgrave; "what is this all about? What do you mean by bidding us good by?"

"Have you found your mother?" exclaimed the two girls in a breath.

"I mean—that is what I am going to say," said Charles, checking his rising sobs, and struggling to gain composure; "I wish to say that I thank you very much, kind sir, for all your goodness to me; and though I have not yet been so happy as to hear of my poor mother, I will no longer intrude upon your bounty; had I before known all that I have heard to-day, I would not have trespassed thus long

upon your goodness. I am now going to maintain myself; I have been out all day seeking for employment, and at last Mr. Spade, the nursery-man, has agreed to give me my food, and a lodging in his tool-house, for my labour; and to-morrow morning I am to be with him by six o'clock."

"No, my boy," said Captain Belgrave, gazing with interest at the little speaker's animated countenance; and considerably moved at such an instance of consideration and feeling in a mere child; "no, you shall not leave us yet. I hope in a few days to hear of a situation better adapted to a lad of your attainments; in the mean time rest happy and contented where you are."

It is hardly necessary to say, that Charles accepted with gratitude this kind proposition.

The next, and many succeeding days, Captain Belgrave was prosecuting his kind inquiries, but unfortunately without any success. In the mean time, the little boy, to whom his attention had been more particularly attracted of late, was acquiring a strong hold upon his affections; and nothing but an imperative sense of duty towards his daughters, would have induced him ever to part with him.

"It is no use," said he, one morning, to Rose, "delaying any longer, nothing offers for poor Charles but the situation at Stamp's, the printer I spoke to you of last week; and even there I should not be able to place him, if the master of the shop had not happened to be under obligation to me. As to pro-

curing the child a situation at all befitting a gentleman's son, it is wholly out of the question, for who in these times will encumber themselves with a boy from whom they can derive no profit. I must speak again to Stamp, and a day must be fixed for the lad's departure."

Chapter XII.

"Let us make the most of this evening," said Emma to Rose, after they had finished their studies for the day; it is the last we shall pass with Charles before his departure."

"Yes, willingly," replied her sister; "how shall we best amuse ourselves?"

"I have not finished copying the song for you, Miss Rose," said Charles; "and there is the index to Miss Emma's music is not yet completed, and we have to plant the slips and layers the gardener brought this afternoon; and there is one of the flower-beds to weed, and the strawberries to water."

"Let us go into the garden at once then," cried Emma; "we have employment enough there till sunset, and it will be much the best amusement;" so saying, she ran for her bonnet, and hastened into the garden, where she was willingly followed by her two companions. With pleased alacrity the three

children betook themselves to their various occupations, leaving off from time to time, to suggest improvements, or to commend each other's work, while Captain Belgrave, who was sitting with a book at his study-window, occasionally surveyed the busy group.

"It is very warm this evening," said Charles, throwing off his jacket, as he returned with two buckets of water, which he had many times replenished from a cistern at the further part of the garden; "this is the warmest day I have felt since I left Florida."

"You are tired, I fear," said Rose, kindly.

"No, not at all," replied Charles; "I like the warmth."

"There is now but this one bed of slips to water," said Emma, "and then all will be finished, and we will call papa to see how nice we have made the garden look. There, now we have quite done," continued she, as she drained the last drop from her watering-pot. "Call papa, Rose; call loud, he does not hear you."

"Shall I go?" demanded Charles, and ask Captain Belgrave if he will come and look at our work."

"We will all go," said Rose; and running up the garden, the children stopped before the window, and begged Captain Belgrave to come out and look at what they had been employing themselves about. With his usual kindness, he rose to comply, and followed the children into the garden, who, full of

zeal, led him about from part to part, to obtain his kind smile, and words of approbation, as they pointed out their various labours.

"Here is water still," exclaimed Emma, as they arrived at the spot where the buckets that Charles last filled were standing; "it is a pity it should be wasted, those carnations look as though a little more would do them good; I will give it to them, they are papa's favourite flowers. Pray, papa," continued she, addressing her father, "fill the watering-pot for me."

"No; no more watering this evening, my little girl," said Captain Belgrave, putting back the hair from off her glowing cheek; "you are heated, and you will tire yourself."

"Oh! no, papa," replied Emma, I am not at all tired ——, if you please, I will just give those plants a little more water; pray, dear papa, empty this bucket for me."

"Well, then, this one must be the last, my little gardener," said Captain Belgrave; "place your watering-pot the other way; there, that's right; now I will fill it for you:" so saying, he stooped down to raise the bucket, but just as he was about to lift it from the ground, a glass with which he had been reading, and that he still retained when he came into the garden, slipped from his hand and fell into the water. Charles, who saw the accident immediately slipped up his sleeve, and plunging his arm into the bucket, brought out the glass and

presented it to Captain Belgrave; but instead of receiving it, Captain Belgrave suddenly started, and eagerly catching hold of the boy's arm, exclaimed; "What do I see! what is that mark! C. B. and an anchor ——, speak, child, how came you by this mark?"

Charles, who was quite perplexed at Captain Belgrave's manner, replied, "that he could not tell himself, but he had heard his mother say, that it must have been done by an Indian nurse."

"Strange coincidence," said Captain Belgrave, sighing deeply, and regaining his wonted composure; "strange coincidence, for it can be nothing more, too surely is my poor boy dead; but he, too, was nursed by an Indian woman, and at a time when my wife was ill, she marked his arm in a similar manner, and with the very same letters too, C. B., the initials of his name, Charlton Belgrave, surmounted by an anchor. But how is it that one of the letters on your arm is a B? your name is Harvey—are you sure," continued he, eagerly, "that your name is really Harvey?"

"Yes, sir," replied Charles, "I am quite certain; my father's name was Harvey."

"True, true my boy," replied Captain Belgrave; and turning away with slow and melancholy steps, he regained the house, where resuming his book, he sought, by reading, to soothe his agitated feelings. But vainly did he strive to fix his attention; his eyes merely wandered mechanically over the page, and

laying aside the volume, he paced musingly up and down the room. "How soon do trifles now affect me," thought he, "my nerves are quite unstrung by this little incident, and yet it certainly is very strange that this boy's arm, and that of mine, should be marked in precisely the same manner, it is singular; and yet still more singular is it, the influence that this little vagrant boy, this son of a smuggler, exercises over me; he has twined himself round my heart in a manner that is unaccountable, and I feel an affection for him, second only to that I experience for my daughters. There is a something, too, about his countenance that seems to fascinate my gaze, and a tone in his voice that at times makes my heart thrill, and to own the truth, which there is no harm in doing to myself, I need not confess it to my daughters, to increase their regret; parting with this child will be to me a most painful affair. Poor boy, it will be a hard trial for him, too; he has conceived a strong attachment to my children and myself, and loves us with all the warmth of a young and affectionate heart, and here, too, he finds pursuits and amusements congenial to his tastes. His mother," said Captain Belgrave to himself, as he continued his musings; "must be a very clever woman, but I fear she has greatly erred in educating him as she has done. The culture and refinement of his mind, will ill fit him for the station in life where he must be placed—and yet the boy has good sense, and is willing to labour—but it is growing late; the sun

has long been set, and the dews of night are falling; it is time the children came in;" and going to the window, he called the little party into the house.

When they were entered, Captain Belgrave, whose mind continued in a state of restless excitement, put various questions to Charles respecting his birth and parentage, and though he had heard the boy's little history twenty times before, he hoped by questioning him, he might elicit something new.

"Try and recall to mind," said he, "whether at any time, anything ever fell from your parents, which might lead you to think that you were not really their son; but only a child adopted by them."

Charles looked at Captain Belgrave with surprise, unable to comprehend the nature of this question; but, after a few moments' reflection, he said, "I suppose, sir, you think it strange that my arm is marked with a B, instead of an H."

"I do," replied Captain Belgrave; "now, try again if you cannot recollect anything that was ever said upon the subject; do you remember your father ever speaking of your birth?"

"No, sir," answered Charles, I do not remember anything, only ——, but that was nothing."

"Only what?" demanded Captain Belgrave, eagerly.

"Only, that when my father was angry, and in a passion, he would call me beggar-brat and foundling, and say that it was no business of his to maintain me."

"Foundling;" repeated Captain Belgrave, breathing short, "and your mother, at such times, what did she say?"

"I once or twice asked her," replied Charles, "when we were alone, what my father meant by such expressions, but she appeared so much distressed, and replied, that my father spoke in a passion, that I never repeated my question."

"And did she never say anything to you to lead you to think that you had other friends besides herself?"

"I do not remember anything," answered Charles, "except that a long while ago, when I was a very little child, she used often to show me the picture of a pretty lady, and ask me if I knew who she was, and if I could tell her name. I had quite forgotten all about the circumstance, till I saw the picture again, just before I came here, when one of my father's companions gave it me, and bade me restore it to my mother, as she valued it above all price."

"Where is that picture?" cried Captain Belgrave.

"I have it here," replied Charles, withdrawing the miniature from his pocket, where he had carefully kept it, as a sacred deposit; and unfolding the paper from around it, he presented it to Captain Belgrave.

"Merciful heaven!" exclaimed he, what do I behold, the picture of my wife, of my beloved Rosalie! and you," continued he, clasping Charles in his arms; "must be my child, my own, my long-

lost Charlton. My heart yearned to you from the first—nature was not deceived; children," continued he, turning to Rose and Emma, who were standing in mute astonishment at the passing scene; "embrace your brother; affection has already bound you to each other, and now you are united by the delightful ties of kindred. By what miracle I see my child alive, I know not, but that it is he himself I cannot doubt; that miniature I hung round my boy's neck, when playing with him the very day that he was lost to us. Let me look at you again, child, I cannot see you enough, my eyes seem to refuse their office. Ah! yes, it must be so, that brow, those eyes are Rosalie's, and the voice, too, resembles hers. To doubt, now, were agony. Oh! where, where is she you call your mother?"

At this moment the door opened, and Mrs. Spicer presenting herself, began saying, "If you please sir, I came to tell you ——," when a female figure that appeared behind, rushed past her into the room, exclaiming, "'tis he, 'tis he himself, I heard him speak."

"My mother!" cried Charles, and uttering an exclamation of joy, he flew into her arms.

"My child! my beloved child!" said Anna, for it was indeed her, and sank into a chair.

"Oh! my mother," sobbed Charles, clinging round her neck; "my dear, dear mother, are you returned to your poor child at last ——, but you are ill, how sick and thin you look! Where have you

been all this time, and what have you done without me to nurse you and take care of you? Speak to me, mother—tell me ——;" but Anna, weakened by illness, and overcome with emotion at the recovery of her adopted child, had fainted away.

"Oh! she is going to die," screamed Charles; "Oh! help, help, my mother will die."

Rose and Emma hastened to afford every assistance that humanity could dictate; and Captain Belgrave having procured some restoratives, succeeded in administering a portion of them to the sufferer. By degrees, sense and consciousness returned, and Anna, opening her eyes, exclaimed, "where, where is my child; I thought I had found him?"

"Here I am, my dear mother," said Charles, and throwing his arms around her neck, he kissed and embraced her with all the warmth of his affectionate nature.

In the mean time, Captain Belgrave had been an agitated spectator of the passing scene. He had watched with intense interest, the indications of affection towards Charles, displayed by Anna; and he had asked himself, if it were possible that such love could exist, independent of the ties of nature. He waited in a state of suspense scarcely endurable, till Anna was sufficiently recovered to speak, and till he had allowed the two beings so deeply interested in each other, sufficient time to rejoice over their happy re-union. At length, unable any longer to control his impatience, he exclaimed, addressing

Anna. "Tell me, I conjure you, tell me truly, is that boy your own child?"

"No sir," replied Anna, "he is my child only by adoption and affection. You, sir, seem so much interested in the question, and as I understand it is to your humanity that I am indebted for the recovery of the boy, that I impart to you a secret it was my determination never to have revealed to any but his natural protectors, should I ever be so fortunate as to find them."

"Oh! my God, I thank thee!" exclaimed Captain Belgrave; "the child then is mine:—but inform me, I beseech you, how it is that I behold him alive? him whom I have long mourned as dead?"

"It is but little I have to tell you, sir," replied Anna, "but that little you shall know: my husband picked the child up, when a mere infant, on the Atlantic ocean, far off the coast of Florida. He was alone in an old fishing-boat; a miniature picture was suspended from his neck, which is unfortunately lost, and a scarf, curiously worked with many-coloured silks, was wound about his little shoulders. Here it is," continued she, producing a scarf, which Captain Belgrave instantly recognised to be one that had been worked by his wife: the family arms occupied the middle space, and a border of anchors, fancifully intermixed with the initials C. B., adorned the ends. "Losing the miniature,' said Anna, "has been a great affliction to me for——"

"It is not lost, dear mother," interrupted Charles, "here it is;" and, placing it in her hands, he whispered a few sorrowful words in her ear, and by her replies he learned that she had already heard the melancholy account of her husband's death.

"You know that picture again?" said Captain Belgrave.

"Yes," answered Anna; "and if I wanted further proof of the parentage of my much-loved charge, it would be afforded me in the striking resemblance it bears to those young ladies.

Charlton (for so he must be called for the future) now begged Anna to state—and in this request he was joined by Captain Belgrave,—how it happened that she had not come to them before; and inquired if none of the advertisements had met her eye.

In reply, she stated that after Harvey quitted her for the last time at L—, she became still more ill, and that having one morning wandered some distance from the tent, in search of food, she became so faint that she fell to the ground, and remembered nothing more, till she was roused by the rough jolting of a cart, into which some humane people, having found her in her destitute condition, had placed her, and were conveying her to the parish work-house. Here she remained extremely ill for some weeks.

"As soon," said she, "as I had gained sufficient strength, I went to L—, to try if I could hear anything of my husband and my dear boy, and there I chanced to meet with a man who communicated to

me my poor husband's fate, and pointed out the advertisements, urging me immediately to repair to London. I mentioned the circumstance to the clergyman who had often visited me in my illness, and he kindly afforded me the means of reaching London. When there, sir, I was directed to your residence; and though I was not aware of the full extent of the happiness that awaited me, still I came here in the joyful expectation that some clue would be afforded me towards the recovery of my lost boy; and now, with heartfelt gratitude I find those hopes more than realized, by not only meeting with the child, but discovering him in the bosom of his family, and claiming for his father a man to whose care and guidance I feel convinced, from the terms in which I have heard him spoken of, I can with satisfaction resign my charge."

Anna having finished her recital, Captain Belgrave, who had waited till she was in some measure recovered from her fatigue and agitation, now expressed, in warm and animated terms, the deep sense of gratitude he entertained towards her for all the care and kindness she had bestowed on his son. He gave her the greatest credit for the judicious manner in which she had conducted his education; but, above everything, he applauded her for having cultivated the virtues of his heart, for having instilled good principles into his mind, and taught him the hardest of all arts, that of governing himself. Anna felt gratified at these encomiums of Captain Bel-

grave's, and in the reflection that she had been the means, under Providence, of imparting great happiness to a worthy individual, and in the thought of the future welfare of her beloved charge, she sought for consolation under the naturally painful feelings she experienced at the idea of a separation from him. But, whatever might be the mixed nature of Anna's feelings, she determined that no expression but that of perfect content should escape her that evening. She would have been sorry to have cast a shade upon the unmixed happiness of the delighted group around her; and in order to divert her thoughts from dwelling upon anything that was painful, she requested Captain Belgrave to have the goodness to acquaint her with the circumstances attending the loss of his son. Captain Belgrave readily complied, and stated, that, being stationed on an unhealthy part of the coast of Carolina, a young Englishwoman, who had accompanied his wife in the capacity of nurse to her little boy, had been seized with a fever, which terminating fatally, a girl, a native of the place, was taken into the family to supply her place. This girl, as it afterwards appeared, was in the habit of quitting the house, whenever an opportunity offered, to meet a friend with whom she was acquainted before entering Mrs. Belgrave's service. One evening, the attention of every member of the family being drawn to Rose, who was suddenly taken dangerously ill, she availed herself of the opportunity of making her escape to go in search of her friend, carrying with her little

Charlton, who had been confided to her care. Two or three hours elapsed from the time of her quitting the house, before her absence, or that of the child, was perceived. Immediately upon the discovery, search was made in every direction; each member of the family was closely questioned; men on horse and foot were despatched all round the country; but no tidings could be learned of the child or his nurse. The whole night was spent in fruitless search, and in making inquiries, the answers to which only served to increase the distress and perplexity of the distracted parents, and it was not till the following morning that the least light was thrown on the mysterious occurrence, when a part of the nurse's garments were found all torn and bloody, in a swampy tract of ground not far from the sea-shore, and about three miles distant from Captain Belgrave's residence. It was then conjectured that the unhappy girl had been destroyed by alligators, or some wild beast, and that through her culpable conduct the child committed to her care had been involved in the same wretched fate. That such had been their end, little doubt could be entertained, for, though no one had seen the young woman since she quitted the house, it had been ascertained that she had not seen her friend that evening; it was, therefore, supposed that she had walked on and on, in the hope of a meeting, till she had wandered into a part of the country where it was unsafe to go alone. Of the providential preservation of Charlton's life, Captain

Belgrave could form no conjecture; but Anna suggested that the servant had either placed the child in the boat that she might walk about more at liberty, or that, seeing herself pursued by some ferocious animal, she had thrown him there for protection, or to disencumber herself of his weight, and that the next tide had carried away the frail bark, and that it had floated far out to sea where Harvey discovered it, and, rescuing the little boy from his perilous situation, brought him home for her to rear.

During the time that Captain Belgrave and Anna were talking, Charlton, although he paid the utmost attention to the conversation, kept close to the side of his foster-mother, either gazing at her much-loved countenance, or resting his head upon her shoulder, or holding her hand tight clasped in both his, as though he feared she should be again lost to him. When she stated how he had fallen to her care, and he found that he had no other claim upon her than charity, he threw his arms around her; exclaiming, "O! mother! dear mother! how good and kind it was of you to take pity on me, when I was a helpless child, and could do nothing but give you trouble! how shall I ever repay you for your goodness?"

"You are, indeed, my dear boy," said Captain Belgrave, "deeply indebted to your excellent protectress, and you must evince your gratitude by following her counsels, and by contiuing to love her; and you will love me too,—will you not, Charlton?" continued Captain Belgrave, who had been greatly

moved at witnessing the indications of a most affectionate heart evinced by his son; "not quite so well at present," added he, with a smile, "as you do your mother,—half as well will do."

Charlton started up, fearing that his joy at again meeting with his mother had so occupied his mind as to make him appear wholly forgetful of his kind benefactor. He advanced towards Captain Belgrave, and said, "I shall love you, dearest sir, quite as well,—at least, in time, I am sure I shall; and these young ladies, too,—are they indeed my sisters? and may I call them such? I can hardly believe that so much happiness is real. But —" Charlton suddenly stopped short, the colour rose in his cheeks, his voice faltered, and, looking up at Captain Belgrave, he exclaimed, "I cannot leave my mother."

"Such a trial, my dear child, does not await you. You remember the pretty ornamented cottage, with roses and jasmine twining round its green verandah, about a quarter of a mile from this house; you remember saying you thought it a very pretty place, with its little flower-garden in front, and small orchard behind. That cottage belongs to me,and you," continued he, addressing Anna, "must do me the favour of accepting it, and the means of always residing there, in comfortable independence, shall be for ever secured to you."

Anna expressed in grateful terms the sense she

entertained of Captain Belgrave's generous intentions towards her; but she said, she must decline his kind offer, as she could not feel happy to live in idle dependence upon the bounty of another. Captain Belgrave assured her, that he considered that in making this gift, he only in part repaid the debt he owed her, for the care and education of his son, during all the years she had kindly fostered him; and that, were it in his power to settle a large fortune on her, he should consider it insufficient remuneration for the culture she had bestowed on his mind and heart; and he added, that she ought to reflect that it was through her that his son was not only preserved, but that he was restored to him such as a father might be proud and delighted to own. Captain Belgrave also represented to Anna, that, by consenting to his plan, Charlton's heart would be set at ease, as he would by that means be enabled to have daily intercourse with one to whom he was justly most tenderly attached; and if," added Captain Belgrave, "you would still continue me your debtor, you will not cease to interest yourself in the future education of your little pupil, but allow him to benefit by your judicious observations, and excellent advice. Assist me, my dears," said he, addressing his daughters, "to prevail upon our kind friend to accede to our wishes."

Rose and Emma gladly joined their petitions to those of their father; for they were already prepos-

sessed in Anna's favour by Charlton's account of her. And they were now impressed with respect for her from her conduct and manners, at the same time that the sweet and benevolent expression of her countenance excited their love.

"Pray, pray, mother," exclaimed Charlton, "accept my kind father's offer; you must, indeed!—Ah! I see you smile; you will consent,—say you will."

"I cannot resist," said Anna, "so many kind entreaties; and if," added she, modestly, "my services can be of any advantage to my benefactors, I shall feel most happy in affording them; at any rate, zeal in the cause will not be wanting."

"How happy we shall be!" exclaimed all the children at once; "and, dear papa," said Rose, taking hold of her father's hand, and looking anxiously in his face, "will not all this joy make you well? Surely you will quite recover now; you will have no more anxiety about Emma and me, now that our brother is found."

"You will be quite well, now,—shall you not, dearest papa?" said Emma, joining her affectionate inquiries to those of her sister; "you look better already."

"If," replied Captain Belgrave, smiling kindly on his children, "a heart overflowing with happiness, and a mind deeply impressed with a sense of gratitude towards the Giver of all good, can impart health, I shall soon be well. Indeed, I feel at this

moment as though all symptoms of illness had left me; and if it shall please God to prolong my life, my first care shall be to promote the happiness and welfare of the beloved and amiable children, with whom it has pleased Him to bless me."

THE END.

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